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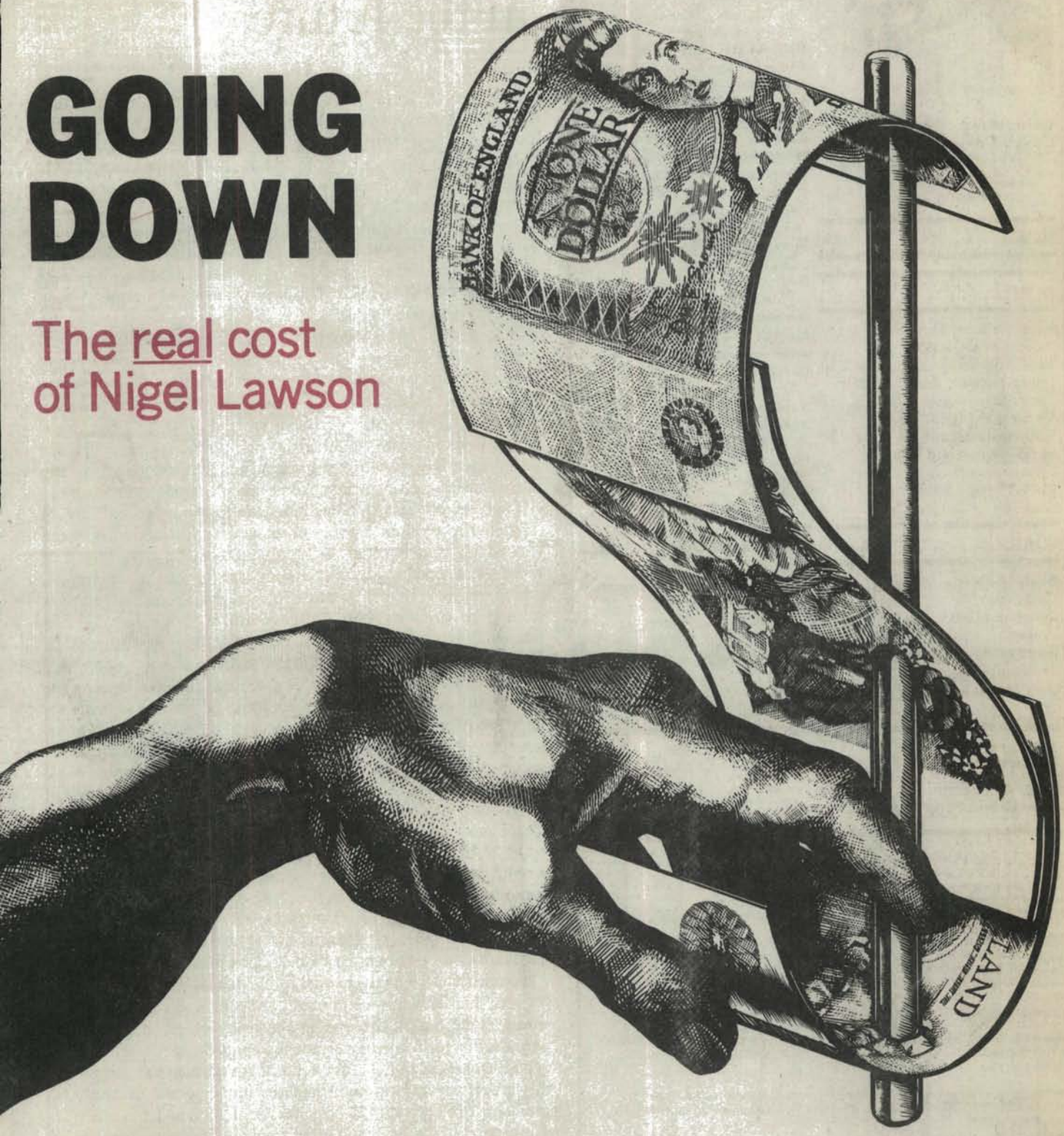
New Statesman

GOING DOWN

The real cost of Nigel Lawson



PLUS: Maxwell and the Mirror • Liverpool politics • Britain's immigration service • Football • Architecture

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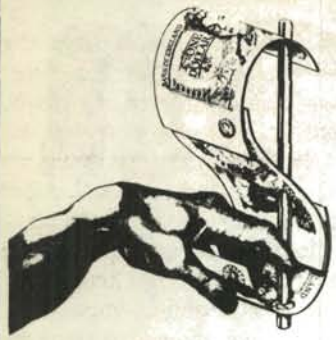
New Statesman



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New Statesman

Vol 108 No 2797 26 October 1984

No investment in the future

IT WAS NOSTALGIC to learn that President Mitterrand used his state visit to lobby once again for a channel tunnel. It took one back to the days before our entry into the Common Market, when Euro-fanatics of every sort pressed the case for the tunnel on the quasi-mystical grounds that it would be a symbol that we wished at last to be linked to the Continent.

Mrs Thatcher is quite right to be against any such ideas. But she is right for entirely the wrong reason. She would be for the tunnel, if it could be financed entirely by private capital, with private enterprise taking the risk and keeping the profit of the operation, if any were ever to be made.

But, as everyone knows that private capital would not come within a mile of a project that combined such capital outlays and such commercial risk, if the tunnel is to be built at all, it will have to be with public money, or under government financial guarantee. And so Mrs Thatcher is dead against it, because it would in one way or the other increase public spending and the government's borrowing requirement and thus reduce her already decreasing scope for cutting income taxes before the next election.

That reason just demonstrates the continuing inability of Thatcherite economic policy to make any distinction between immediate consumption and long-term capital investment. If there was a good long-term economic case for the channel tunnel, which private capital because of its short-term imperatives refused to support, then the government should arrange the finance. It would be a worthwhile investment for the future of the British economy. But the fact is that there is no such case.

There is a slightly better French case for the project, because the French end of the tunnel would come up in the industrially depressed Pas de Calais, where successive French governments have tried to stimulate commercial activity, without much success. From the point of view of French regional planning some benefit might flow from the diversion through northern France of freight and tourism that would otherwise have gone to the Continent through Belgium and Holland.

But from the point of view of British regional planning there is absolutely no point at all in further distorting industrial communications in favour of Kent and the southeast. The natural flow for the majority of commercial traffic between the United Kingdom and the Continent is not Dover-Calais, but from the midlands and north, via East Coast ports and the North Sea.

No one knows what a channel tunnel would end up costing (or for that matter some combined tunnel-bridge variant), but it would come out in the end in the order of several billion of pounds. If some future government were to decide, in terms of an overall transport policy, that a public investment programme of this order was appropriate, then the money could certainly be spent on projects with a positive social return. Investment in shipping, port facilities and other transport infrastructure would provide a much cheaper and more flexible improvement in capacity than an extremely expensive and immovable hole under the Straits of Dover, linking two points without much in the way of traffic growth potential.

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MRS THATCHER'S response to President Mitterrand's renewed proposal of another joint Anglo-French industrial project (with all the commercial promise of another Concorde) nevertheless underlines the complete intellectual bankruptcy of Thatcherite economics. No trainee accountant would allow a company to present its finances as Mr Lawson (and Sir Geoffrey Howe before him) has been obliged to present the Exchequer accounts in order to produce the contorted conclusion that the medium term financial and economic strategy is 'still on target'.

The biggest single item in the charge against the economic policy of the past five years has concerned North Sea oil. Mrs Thatcher has presided over the period when the government's total 'take' from the North Sea has been at its height. Last week's decision by Britoil to drop the dollar price of our crude sent a predictable tremor through Opec, because of the possibility that Britain was going to lead a price cutting war amongst oil producers. But it ought to have sent a more serious shiver through the Treasury.

For it was an uncomfortable and timely warning that the days of plenty are numbered for the North Sea. Most forecasters are agreed that 1986 will see the high point of revenue from the North Sea to the Exchequer. It could then be running at a peak of around £15 billion a year. Thereafter it could fall away fast.

Then people will look back on the 1980s and ask the following question. How could it be that the United Kingdom, knowing that for a relatively brief period it was going to enjoy the status of an honorary member of Opec, used the money to finance personal consumption by way of tax cuts and failed to invest any significant part of it in long-term investment for the future?

Ironically, such a policy would have fitted the 'Victorian values' that Mrs Thatcher is so keen about in other contexts. But instead, partly out of a doctrinaire obsession with figures for public sector borrowing and partly out of partisan desire to give tax concessions to her actual and potential supporters, the Treasury books have been cooked, so that extraordinary North Sea income is lumped with ordinary income and sales of capital assets, like British Telecom, are treated as if what was raised was also ordinary income.

Mrs Thatcher's grocer father must be turning in his grave at the unsoundness of it all. But it is future generations of Britons who will suffer for ever the consequences of such a wantonly squandered opportunity. □

Pretoria takes fright

IN THE EARLY 1960s, when the African township of Sharpeville had first entered the vocabulary of South African politics, the racist regime in Pretoria for a moment looked very shakey. And it felt itself to be shakey. It was possible to bring oneself for a year or so to believe that real political change was under way.

But then came the crackdown. In order to hang on to its total monopoly of political and industrial power in a country where it was in such a substantial minority, the regime gave up any pretence that it wanted a liberal democracy, with concern for civil liberty, and became instead the full-blown police state that South Africa is today.

The crackdown was so complete and ruthless that for the past two decades the Pretoria regime has never again looked so vulnerable as it did in the immediate aftermath of Sharpeville. But the events of this last week have reminded the rest of the world that white South Africa still has a running civil war on its hands — and that it shows no sign of winning it. Quite the reverse.

The Pretoria regime has to believe that the permanent civil unrest at home is fomented by agents of Moscow and others from outside. Much of the past two decades has been taken up with attempting to secure *cordons sanitaires* in the states to the north of South Africa.

It has cost white South Africa substantially to wage these undeclared colonial wars beyond its borders in Namibia, Angola and Mozambique. The level of casualties suffered as a result of operations into Angola at the end of last year provoked quite strong domestic hostility to what the government was doing, even in normally 'patriotic' Africaner circles. And the South African government has had considerable success in destabalising, for example, the government in Mozambique and in effectively disrupting the operations of the African National Congress.

But the reality, which Pretoria finds it almost impossible to accept, is that the real threat is not from without. It is right there inside South Africa itself. The deployment of 7,000 troops and police against Sebokeng and the other African townships near Johannesburg (including Sharpeville) failed to uncover a network of foreign-based subversion behind the widespread civil disorder of the past few months.

It discovered instead that black South Africa is spontaneously rebelling against the lot that white South Africa wishes to keep imposed upon it. The cynical attempts to change the Constitution, so as to bring Indians and Coloureds in on the side of the Whites against the Africans, failed this year in a humiliatingly near total boycott. The white tribe of Africa remains under increasing pressure that is coming from within its own borders. □

LORD DENNING
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Even in retirement a controversial figure, Lord Denning looks at some of the historic cases which have helped shape our legal system and comments on their relevance to such contemporary issues as the Libyan Embassy siege, the miners' strike and the GCHQ affair.

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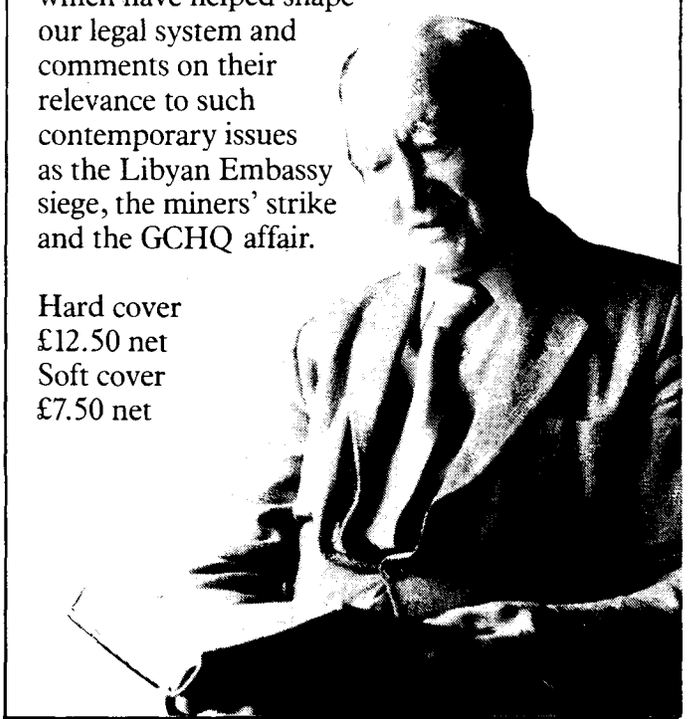

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CONTRAS TO SET RAY HOOKER FREE

THE HIGH DRAMA of the kidnapping of Nicaraguan Sandinista candidate Ray Hooker (*NS* 14 September), followed by discovery that he was still alive (*NS* 28 September), culminates now in news that he's to be released, unharmed it's to be hoped. STEWART LANSLEY reports

CANDIDATE for 'Special Zone 2' in the forthcoming Nicaraguan general election, Hooker was seized some six weeks ago together with Patricia Delgado, regional secretary of the FSLN on the Atlantic coast, and two further colleagues, while they were travelling in the remote parts of the coast.

It was immediately supposed that he and his party had been taken by 'contras', or counter-revolutionary forces, and might as in many other cases disappear without further trace. But on 22 October it was announced that the International Red Cross is to handle his release following talks between FSLN leaders in Managua and Brooklin Rivera, leader of the Misurasata group of contras.

There has been intense international pressure for Hooker's release — including from Dr Peter Barry, Irish Foreign minister and president of the EEC Council of Ministers, who raised the matter on 29 September in the Costa Rican capital, San Jose.

The release announcement also coincides with a visit to Costa Rica, financed by War on Want, by Lord Chitnis representing the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group, aiming to secure Hooker's release on humanitarian grounds. Chitnis had fixed to meet with guerrilla leaders and the Costa Rican minister of information.

The captured candidate — Hooker

The Misurasata contra group who are releasing the first candidate to have been taken (though election officials have been seized) comprises some 3000 Indians of the Miskitu Sumu and Rama tribe, who have been mounting operations against Nicaragua's Sandanista regime from Costa Rica.

Their leader Rivera, himself a Miskitu, went to Managua in the course of the Sandinista announcement of an amnesty for all Miskitus. He, for his part, is seeking the return to Nicaragua of over 20,000 Miskitu refugees, most of whom are currently in the Honduras. ●

What was the Duke of Kent up to going to Turkey?

THE DUKE OF KENT'S description of his recent visit to Turkey as being mainly interested in 'infrastructure and energy' (*The Times* 3 October) puts a singularly innocuous gloss on a trip that strikes human rights activists as having been open to very serious criticism.

Together with a dozen British business executives he was on a British Overseas Trade Board (BOTB) mission seeking Turkish government contracts for, among other things, a nuclear power station and major military equipment. But the regime allegedly took the opportunity to ask the Duke for help in its political objectives.

As the delegation arrived in Turkey the Turkish press (notably *Cumhuriyet*, Turkish equivalent to *The Times*) announced that Northern Engineering Industries was there to compete against the Canadian firm AECL for the Akkuyu nuclear power station, while British Aerospace was trying to sell Tornados and Rapiers.

A spokesperson for British Aerospace later confirmed that one of their directors, Alec Sanson, was indeed there to push through a contract on Tornados, but said there were 'two other defence projects in the pipeline which we don't want to talk about'. NEI said that their director on the trip, Graeme Anderson, was away and no-one else knew anything.

The competition for the contracts on the Akkuyu nuclear power station — worth a total of about $4.4 billion — will be stiff. President Reagan has already written to West Germany's Chancellor Kohl asking for 'free competition' and no State subsidies when it comes to the bidding.

That sort of spirit should go down well in Turkey. One of the British trade delegates, Stephen Tough of Mott, Hay and Anderson (civil engineers), reported that there was great enthusiasm amongst the mission members to find that a free market economy had been adopted in the last four years (i.e. since the coup) by both government and business. There is, of course, also 20 per cent unemployment and inflation of 55 per cent a year.

Camera Press

Kent — meantime Anne saves the children

This November the government of Turgut Ozal celebrates the first anniversary of the 'normalisation' of Turkish government after the military coup. The BOTB mission was accordingly invaluable in lending credibility to a so-called democracy which is currently prosecuting and imprisoning members of the peace and women's movement and trade unions, writers, lawyers and intellectuals, and is anathematized for its well-documented and appalling violations of human rights (e.g. BBC2 *Brass Tacks* on 17 October).

Ozal reportedly asked the Duke to help lift the 'unfair' EEC block on funds to Turkey — British Tories having lobbied hard and successfully earlier this year for Turkey to be readmitted to the Council of Europe. Shortly after the BOTB delegation returned home (early October) Turkey made fresh representations to the EEC, backed by British Tories. If the moratorium is lifted, it will release about £200 million in grant aid etc for those famous energy and infrastructure projects.

Jane Dibblin

Councillors livid about DoE leaflets' cash claims

A LEAFLET being pushed through every door in Department of Environment (DoE) 'hit list' local authorities, as part of the DoE's £500,000 campaign to win over hearts and minds to government policy, has immediately come under attack for alleged factual inaccuracy.

DoE Secretary of State Patrick Jenkin claims in the leaflet that for most of the councils he's 'looking for a cash standstill — for councils to spend the same figure in cash as they are spending this year'. The exceptions, where he says he wants a 1½ per cent cut, are the GLC, ILEA, and Greenwich.

The cash standstill assertion is under fire from almost every rate-capped authority. Camden's borough treasurer for example, John Marlow, retorts that Camden's spending this year is due to be £126 million, while the DoE has capped next year's at below £117½ million — not a standstill, but a cash cut of 6.7 per cent, and an even steeper cut in real terms allowing for inflation.

Not all the authorities have gone this public on their figures, but the Association of Metropolitan Authorities has confidential returns from 13 of its 16 rate-capped members. All, it seems, face cash cuts, not a standstill, ranging from 1.1 per cent in Lambeth to 14.8 per cent at the top of the list.

Commenting on the leaflet — which ironically says councillors are 'still free to decide on their priorities' — Sandy Wynn, Camden's deputy leader, says 'It's as fraudulent as rate capping itself. If the government returned one sixth of the rate support grant it has taken from Camden since 1982 we'd be able to cut the rates to Jenkin's level and keep improving services.'

The rate-capped authorities are kicking up about it all. Tory-led Brent has already sent the leaflet to the Advertising Standards Authority, and the Local Government Campaign Unit, which is funded by 50 councils, is considering taking action under the Trades Description Act.

Hugh Bayley

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UK SHOULD HAVE LET EURATOM CHECK UP

THE BRITISH government has apparently been defying the law for over a decade by refusing to allow inspectors from Euratom, the European safeguards agency, to visit the Magnox fuel reprocessing line at Sellafield in Cumbria. Negotiations to resolve this 'very difficult problem' have been going on without much progress ever since Britain joined the Common Market in 1973.

Euratom has a duty to inspect all Britain's civil nuclear facilities to check that they are not being used for military purposes. Article 81 of the Euratom Treaty says that the agency's inspectors 'shall at all times have access to all places' necessary to satisfy themselves that no diversion has occurred.

The problem is that the British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL) main reprocessing plant at Sellafield has a dual civil and military function. It separates plutonium for both the fast reactor programme and for nuclear warheads. The spent fuel from electricity board reactors is 'co-processed' with spent fuel from the acknowledged military reactors run by BNFL at Calder Hall and Chapelcross. Euratom is denied access to verify the civil side of the operation because, according to BNFL, this 'would give them access to other information which we are instructed not to reveal'.

Other plants on the site have frequently been visited by Euratom inspectors: there have been 60 inspection visits involving some 410 'man days' of effort over the last 10 years. The other main safeguards authority, the International Atomic Energy Agency, has inspected two storage facilities at Sellafield, but hasn't looked at the Magnox reprocessing line.

When cross examined on this issue by CND at the Sizewell Inquiry last week, senior BNFL executives stressed that, although physical access to the reprocessing line was denied, the safeguards authorities were able to check the written accounts which estimate the amounts of civil plutonium present before and after reprocessing. But CND argue that this kind of audit wouldn't necessarily detect the swopping of civil and military plutonium during reprocessing.

Rob Edwards

Rob Edwards is co-ordinator of the CND Sizewell Working Group

UK isolated as Falklands comes up at UN

DESPITE some pretty rough diplomatic arm-twisting behind the scenes Britain faces another heavy defeat next month when the UN General Assembly debates the dispute with Argentina over the Falklands.

de Cuellar

Some of Britain's closest allies have informally advised London they'll be unable to support the British, who have refused to re-open negotiations on the two countries' conflicting claims to sovereignty of the islands.

Most disappointing of all although hardly surprising has been the US attitude. President Reagan's administration has made it clear it disagrees profoundly with Mrs Thatcher's blunt assertion that 'sovereignty is not negotiable.' The US therefore intends supporting Argentina's call for talks through the good offices of the UN Secretary General Peres de Cuellar.

Britain's nine partners in the EEC have all set their faces against an anti-negotiating vote. Under London's pressure for a display of community solidarity, however, most are likely to abstain as they did in 1983. Several with strong ethnic or economic ties with Argentina and other Latin American countries would like to support the Argentine position — Italy, France and West Germany among them.

Around 3 million Italians are settled in Argentina, France and West Germany have both been seeking to supplant Britain in key Latin American markets, including Argentina itself.

The issue of the UN vote has come up during Mrs Thatcher's talks with the Italian Prime Minister Signor Craxi and French President François Mitterand in the past few days, with the British leader and her officials urging their visitors not to leave this country in the lurch.

President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina, meanwhile, has not been idle. During talks in Paris and Rome this week he's been pressing the French and Italians to show greater understanding of the Argentine position especially when the vote takes place.

During the General Assembly debate last year 87 countries voted for a resolution authorising the Secretary General to try to get the two parties together; nine including Britain voted against while there were 64 abstentions including the Community countries and several Commonwealth states. In his report to the World body Signor de Cuellar is expected to emphasise that all his efforts for a restoration of the dialogue have failed because of the unreadiness of the two sides to move to a negotiating posture.

Arthur Gavshon

MISCELLANY

Fares unfair

In the afterglow of the Pretty Policeman's Ball, last Sunday's fund-raising event for London Gay Switchboard at London's Piccadilly Theatre — first time, as Nicholas de Jongh noted in the *Guardian*, that the gay movement has 'made the grade in a West End theatre', and miraculously timed to coincide exactly with Sir Kenneth Newman's rebuke to the Met for insufficiently strong rules against 'enticing' — British Rail turns out to remain ploddingly humourless. A reader of the *NS* tells us that in June he wrote to R.B. Reid, chair of BR, as follows: 'I have always found the various incentive concessions in the rail fare structure unduly complicated, difficult to use fully and even more difficult to understand . . . However, myself and my boyfriend have found that the Persil tickets have been particularly useful to us and we would like to suggest therefore that you should introduce a concession similar to the Persil ticket on a permanent basis to allow single sex couples, two women as well as two men, to travel together for the price of one. Perhaps they could be called

Fairy tickets. I am sure you would find they would generate substantial traffic whilst clearing British Rail of any accusation of bias against gay people. I look forward to your reply.' But answer, there has been none.

Women's role at TGWU

Britain's largest union could have problems replacing its women's officer, Marie Patterson. She's been with the TGWU for 29 years — 22 of them as women's officer — and she's still the only woman national official of the union with the largest number of women members. Much head scratching is going on to think of women who might apply — though the job is in fact also open to men. Sylvia Greenwood, an official in the Sheffield area, would be a strong contender, but she's refusing to apply. Which could give London district official Margaret Prosser a chance. Marie Patterson's resignation — handed in ten days' after her marriage to the Daily Express's *industrial editor — will change the face of the women's TUC. She's chaired that conference for 12 years, and survived campaigns by some unions to remove her by means of a 'rotating' chair. The (still-stationary) chair has been handed on to Ada Maddocks of the Town Hall union, Nalgo. Hers was the only nomination.*

Pith artist forgets

'Why didn't they ask Evans?' Agatha Christie cried. But they do. The famed former editor of the *Sunday Times*, or 'One Chauffeur' as he's fondly remembered in these inflationary times round at Gray's Inn Rd, has just been named editorial director of *US News & World Report*, the weekly recently bought by Mortimer Zuckerman, Boston real estate realtor and magazine aquisitor — the 'Rupert Murdoch of the neo-Liberal set', as they call him. USNWR has had an unblemished right-wing reputation for years, but there'll be great improvements now. Or will there? The *New York Times* quotes Harry as saying 'It may sound pompous but my task is strategic . . . I'm certainly a liberal on civil and human rights, but I have a strong line on East-West matters. I'm non-ideological'. Either the *Times* itself put him into that stagnant New York evado-babble — or he's actually *forgotten everything he ever learnt* from Arthur Christiansen and Hugh Cudlipp back here in the old country, long ago. Poor Harry, who was once so full of pith.

Ana Gram doodles (3)

Gerald Kaufman has drawn a good quiverful of anagrams, to follow Neil Kinnock ('I knock Lenin') and Roy Hattersley ('The Tory slayer'). As before we pass NO comment on the political soundness of this parlour game's entries. For the shadow Home Secretary we've had 'A UK red flag man' from Christian Wolmar, 'A glad fun maker' from Ephraim Prout (which sounds like a staff entry under a pseudonym), and this shocking one from Salman Rushdie: 'Glum and a faker'. Sorry about that. And from Mark Sievewright of Sheffield — turning the wheel full circle — 'Fluked anagram'. Next week, if anyone has the strength, Michael Meacher.

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ANTI APARTHEID FEUD REACHES OPEN CRISIS

A LONG SIMMERING dispute within the British protest movement against apartheid has reached crisis point just as the world beyond is cheered by the Nobel prize for Bishop Tutu. TERRY O'HALLORAN reports.

CITY OF LONDON Anti-Apartheid group (City AA) has come under fire from the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) executive commitee for 'not functioning as a normal AA group'. In a letter dated 25 September and signed by Mike Terry, City AA has been called on to agree to a series of restrictions on its activities:

- membership to be confined to people living or working in the City of London
- activities to be confined to the City's square mile
- City AA not to approach national organisations or campaign on local issues, or on issues particular to Britain, without consulting the AAM executive committee.

Finally, the AAM demands that City AA seek the 'dissolution' of the South African Embassy Picket Campaign. SAPEC is the umbrella body which this August in a Bow Street magistrates' ruling (*NS* 3 August) successfully defeated the Metropolitan Police's attempted ban on demonstrations outside the SA embassy in Trafagar Square.

The AAM executive committee's attempt to impose restrictions follows a long simmering conflict between the AAM leadership and City AA. The restrictions would be crippling, effectively abolishing City AA as very few of its members live or work in the City. Further, the SA embassy is outside the City so the restrictions would achieve what the police failed to: a ban on City AA's weekly pickets.

City AA members are reported to be angry about the EC's demands. Carol Brickley, convenor and founder of City AA, agreed to speak to the *New Statesman* about the dispute.

Provocative? A front?

Brickley claims that City AA has been subjected to a 'whisper' campaign ever since its formation in February 1982. She says the group has been attacked from AAM platforms; accused of provoking confrontation with the police; and accused of being a 'front' for the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG).

The AAM's letter of 25 September doesn't in fact say what is 'wrong' with City AA. It simply says: '. . . the AAM EC does not believe that City AA group is functioning as a normal AA group.'

Brickley vigorously defends City AA's record: 'We have 175 members. Young people, unemployed people, black youth, punks, skinheads, an old age pensioners group, Young Liberals, Labour Party members, communists, anarchists and people of no political affiliation'.

Organised on the basis of open democratic meetings, City AA decisions are made by the members and everyone can take part: 'Sometimes the meetings are very long. Young people are a very argumentative bunch.' Members are 'insulted' and 'angered' by being called a 'front'; the RCG forms just 4 per cent of the membership. The fact that so many people of such different views are actively involved has been, she thinks, 'the best guarantee' against the group becoming a 'front'.

Paul Mattson

Just one City AA event — Hackney to Trafalgar Square on 24 March

Carol Brickley dismisses the accusation of 'confrontation', saying that the police created the confrontation by unjustified arrests of picketers. She observes that out of 190 arrests — including the 161 arrests during the attempt to ban pickets outside South Africa House — the police secured only two convictions on trivial offences. In a recent case the magistrate described the police charges against a City AA member as 'bloody ridiculous'.

She also alleges that City AA has achieved important results. The 86-day picket organised with the Kitson family in 1982 was crucial in securing the transfer of David Kitson and other political prisoners to better conditions. David Kitson himself has confirmed this, and stressed the importance of activity around the South African embassy as the 'point of maximum pain' for apartheid.

The AAM EC, however, opposed the defiance campaign. In a statement issued on 10 July, the EC said that it

> . . . does not support (SAEPC's) approach, believes that it damages the prospects of achieving a removal of the ban, and therefore asks its members and supporters not to participate in this campaign.

Brickley said that she first saw this statement on the day that four people were sent to prison for their part in the campaign.

Asked why such hostility should be directed at City AA, Carol Brickley says 'ask the AAM executive committee that'. But at the time of writing we were unsuccessful in trying to get a comment from the AAM.

As she points out, three Labour MPs — Stuart Holland, Tony Banks, and Jeremy Corbyn — have all agreed to be nominated by City AA for the AAM executive committee. All three describe themselves as SAEPC supporters, and were arrested during this summer's now so contentious defiance campaign.

The unfortunate controversy will take a further turn this weekend at the AAM annual conference, at which City AA have a motion down criticising the AAM executive committee's attitude to recent campaigns. ●

Correction

Injectable contraceptive Depo Provera is still being administered *after childbirth*, not, as erroneously stated on this page last week, *during pregnancy* (*NS* 19 October).

Ultra secrecy of the CEGB

SO GREAT was the obsession for secrecy about the Central Electricity Generating Board's plans to crash a train into a spent nuclear fuel flask this July that those involved were urged to deceive their friends rather than say anything about what was planned. This is revealed by an internal document which has been leaked to the environmental pressure group Greenpeace.

In a letter dated 5 May 1983, Mr E.P.S. Tufton of engineering consultants Ove Arup and Partners told those involved in the CEGB project that their work was classified as 'CEBG SECRET', the top security classification within the Board. The CEGB's staff handbook says that this classification is only rarely used in day to day work except at the most senior level. It only applies to information which, if disclosed, 'would cause serious harm or embarrassment to the Board'.

Tufton said that it was unusual for outsiders to have access to this kind of information and so it was necessary 'to be more careful than usual about confidences'. He continued helpfully: 'I suggest that: (a) we should not volunteer to anyone, friend, acquaintance or stranger in the pub, that the Board is considering full-scale tests on a flask; (b) if pressed, we should just say that if the Board were considering such tests, they would not necessarily tell us.'

Tufton described too how the precise nature of the CEGB's plans was being concealed from staff in the other organisations involved (like British Rail), on a 'need to know' basis. Reminding his colleagues that some other work they were doing on flask safety was subject to the lower security classification, 'CEGB CONFIDENTIAL', he warned them not to be 'casual' about it as its exposure could embarrass the CEGB.

Greenpeace promises more leaked documents in support of its allegations made earlier this week that the spectacular 100mph rail crash staged in July was rigged and that the CEBG misled the public about it (see *NS* 20 July 1984). On Monday the CEGB dismissed as 'trivia' some documents which Greenpeace said showed that there were worse crashes imaginable than the one arranged by the CEGB. Greenpeace's claim that modifications had been made to the train and coaches to lessen the impact on the fuel flask was also strenuously denied.

Unfortunately the opportunity to test the relevance and importance of this new evidence isn't likely to be taken up at the Torness Railhead Inquiry which opened on Tuesday at Dunbar in East Lothian (*NS* 14 September 1984). The Reporter, George Maycock, has restricted the Inquiry's remit in a way that rules out discussion on flask safety in an emergency. He has also rejected a call for the Inquiry to be postponed to consider the new evidence. Objectors, including the local district council and Greenpeace, have been left in no doubt that he wants the whole thing over by the end of the week. **Rob Edwards**

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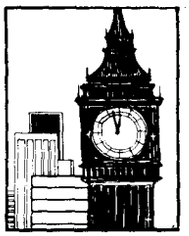

PETER KELLNER

Hattersley puts socialism back on the agenda

'THE THING ABOUT Hattersley's personal ambition is he's entirely open about it.' Tony Crosland's assessment, reported in Susan Crosland's biography of her husband, is one of the few political statements that anyone can make these days without risking contradiction — least of all from Roy Hattersley himself. It is also a familiar point. Less familiar is what Crosland went on to say: 'And unlike most of that group' — Crosland meant other leading Labour Party right-winners of the time, like Roy Jenkins and Shirley Williams — 'he's an egalitarian. Very big political potential there.'

Twelve years, four general elections, three Labour leadership contests and two dozen defections to the SDP later, Hattersley is finally coming good. After a difficult first year as Labour's deputy leader, he is now emerging as a man with both the determination and the capacity to fight alongside Neil Kinnock and maximise Labour's chances of winning the next election.

That ought to be a statement of the blindingly obvious; what is the point of choosing as deputy leader someone who cannot or will not support his leader? Yet last autumn those qualities were widely doubted; and Hattersley appeared to do little to counter his critics when he spent his first few months as deputy leader keeping a profile so low that it took the evidence of his *Guardian* and *Punch* columns to convince sceptics that his name had not joined the missing persons list.

Indeed, a fully rounded theory was developed to explain what Hattersley was up to. It went like this. If Kinnock lasted as leader, Hattersley would never rise above number two. However, our Roy thought Neil would make a dreadful leader, lose Labour the next election, and then come under strong pressure to step down. In 1988 Hattersley would be only 55: young enough to take over, lead Labour into the following general election and become Prime Minister before his sixtieth birthday.

Crucial to this Hattersley-for-PM theory was the belief, or hope, that Kinnock would not — must not — last as leader. So Hattersley had to keep sufficient distance from the new leader not to be drowned, if and when Kinnock's ship sank.

It would be daft to suppose that Hatterlsey has never considered the consequences of Kinnock stepping in front of an out-of-control bus. Most ambitious politicians construct fantasies in their minds about how they might reach the top of the greasy pole. During the 1976 Labour leadership contest, I recall one of Tony Crosland's closest aides explaining to me with evident sincerity how Crosland would end up on top, picking up support in each ballot as other contenders were eliminated. In the event Crosland came last with just 17 votes.

But fantasies apart, there is no evidence I know of to support the view that Hattersley now expects to triumph over Kinnock's prostrate body. That does not mean Hattersley is certain of a Labour victory in three years' time; it does mean that he sees his own fortunes between now and the next general election as intimately bound up with Kinnock's. If he is seen to be less than totally loyal, Hattersley can bid farewell to any hopes he has of succeeding to the crown.

Besides, the ambitions of the two men have now become a unifying force, rather than the divisive factor that it was during the leadership campaign. Since then it has been Kinnock's own ambition that, more than anything, has persuaded Hattersley to become an active and enthusiastic campaigner for a Labour victory. 'Never before have I met anyone so determined to become Prime Minister', Hattersley tells friends; it is the highest compliment he can pay another politician.

THE CLEAREST symbol of Hatterley's new approach came in July when he proposed acceptance in the National Executive of the party's new defence document, even though it commits Labour to unilateral nuclear disarmament.

When asked on television about this commitment, Hattersley says he first fought on a unilateralist manifesto in 1964, so what is all the fuss about? This is disingenuous. In his 'personal statement' for the leadership election Hattersley had this to say about unilateralism and the 1983 general election:

> There was some [public] sympathy for our offer to include Polaris in multilateral negotiations. *But the notion that we might give up our nuclear protection if others did not do the same was overwhelmingly rejected.* (Hattersley's emphasis)

A particularly sharp Jesuit might argue that Hattersley was simply providing an objective account of public attitudes and not necessarily endorsing those attitudes as his own. It is more plausible that he thinks the party has obtained the most coherent defence policy possible in the circumstances, including a commitment to increase spending on conventional defence if necessary, and he is willing to campaign actively for the whole, as it were, shooting match.

If defence has provided a symbol of the new, improved Hattersley, his recent speeches on the economy have added evidence that he is redder than red. He has taken two gambles: first by offering a clearer concept of socialism than any leading Labour politician since Crosland; second by ending the mealy-mouthed attitude of the Foot-Healey years to incomes policy.

Along the way Hattersley has been careful to stake out fresh ground, and not just align himself with an existing party faction; indeed that assertion of ideological independence is probably the most important thing he has done. In his speech a month ago on new forms of public ownership, Hattersley's thinly veiled criticism of Tony Benn was widely noticed:

> Whoever was responsible for attempting to prop up the night storage heater and soft-drink co-operative set back the cause of public enterprise by years.

Less widely noticed, but more significant, was his no less thinly disguised attack on Crosland's ideas:

> Ownership and control are indivisible. . .The notion of control without ownership was part of the socialist sentimentality of the 1950s and '60s.

(To demonstrate his own lack of sentimentality in these matters, Hattersley saw earlier than most how Robert Maxwell's ownership of the *Mirror* group newspapers would affect their editorial approach. He refused to allow his journalistic scruples to stand in the way of his political judgment, and persuaded Kinnock not to denounce the take-over. I reckon his political judgment is wrong and that in the long run Maxwell is bad news for Labour as well as journalism; but at least Hattersley has steered well clear of the nonsense that ownership of a newspaper has nothing to do with editorial control.)

On incomes policy, Hattersley could scarcely have been more direct. In his Aneurin Bevan memorial lecture at Redditch two weeks ago he said:

> If we are to move at anything like reasonable speed towards full employment — and certainly if we are ever to achieve it — some agreement on incomes is necessary. . .If the trade unions cannot come to an agreement on planning incomes, then the next Labour government will be forced to move more slowly towards the reduction of unemployment.

So far Hattersley's reception inside the party has been surprisingly free from rent-a-crowd criticism; his speech on economic policy at the party conference in Blackpool was received with almost as much warmth as Tony Benn's speech on the miners. Perhaps a new tide is flowing in the party — in which fresh, open-minded arguments about the nature of socialism are positively sought, rather than uneasily tolerated. And perhaps Hattersley has caught that tide. If both things are true, then something important and hopeful is at last happening to the party. □

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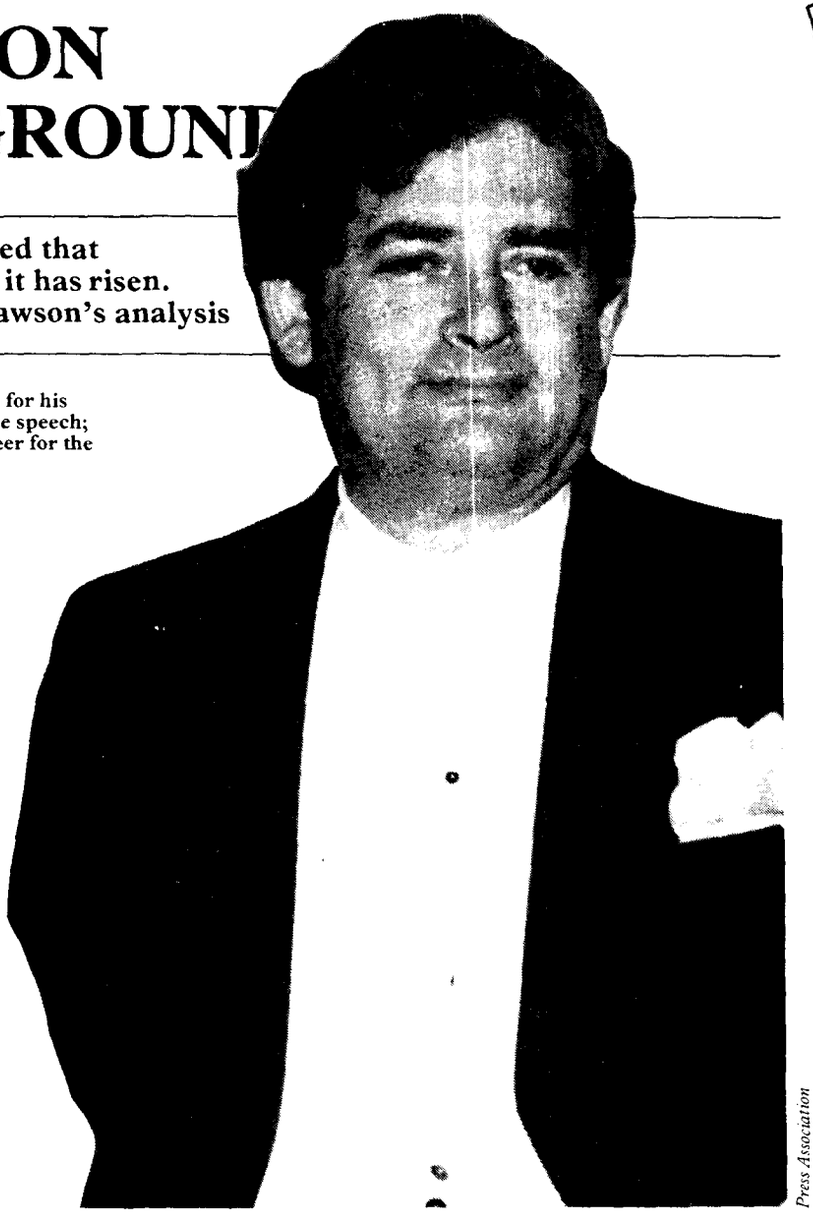
LAWSON GOES ON SHIFTING HIS GROUND

In 1983 the Chancellor confidently predicted that unemployment would fall in 1984. Instead it has risen. Gavyn Davies looks at the basic flaws in Lawson's analysis



All dressed up for his Mansion House speech; but still no cheer for the unemployed

Press Association

IN JUST OVER a year as Chancellor, Nigel Lawson's analysis of the unemployment problem has already passed through three distinct phases.

First, he told us that the control of inflation was both a *necessary* and *sufficient* condition to bring unemployment down. In the election month of June 1983, inflation was clearly under better control than it had been since the 1960s, so Mr Lawson went on record with a forecast that unemployment would start to fall in 1984.

By December, he had moved into Phase Two: actually claiming success. Not only did he tell us then that unemployment had *already* started to fall, he poured scorn on those who had doubted his optimistic projections at election time. His confidence did not last long. The very next month unemployment jumped by 30,000 and has been rising remorselessly ever since.

So the Chancellor has had to make a swift adjustment to Phase Three. Now we are informed that the continuing rise in the jobless total has nothing whatever to do with government policy, but is jointly explained by an awkward tendency of married women and others outside the labour force to want gainful employment; and an even more awkward tendency of trade unions to bargain for higher real living standards. Lawson's Phase Three analysis sees unemployment in the same light as a plague of locusts — sent from outside to afflict an unsuspecting nation — and not particularly amenable to cure.

So far, the 'plague of locusts' phase has proved something of a failure, even with the Conservative Party Conference — not normally noted for its outspoken criticism of Tory Chancellors in office. The public may still be willing to concede that no government could easily cure a jobless problem which chronically affects the whole of Europe, but it is no longer willing to watch with approval as the Chancellor shrugs his shoulders at a further *rise* in unemployment, even in the 'upswing' phase of the economic cycle.

The Mansion House speech last week was a particular case in point. The Chancellor was admittedly constrained by knowing that he was addressing an international audience, only too ready to 'dump' sterling, but even the City is begging to view with suspicion his continuing claims of unbridled success. Yet, in one respect, it was possible to feel some sympathy for the Chancellor. He seems genuinely taken aback by the fact that a political storm on unemployment has now broken just when the UK seems set to smash records for the longest period of continuous recovery in output since the War — achieved without any significant sign yet that inflation is being rekindled.

Why, then, has the storm broken now? The proximate cause has probably been the emerging evidence that economic growth has started to slow down in recent months. Even after making full allowance for the depressing effects of the miners' strike on output, total UK production (GDP) has been rising so far this year at an annual rate of under 2 per cent, instead of the 3 per cent which the Treasury (and many others) predicted as recently as Budget time. Companies have once again been meeting demand by reducing their stocks, instead of increasing their output, and export growth has been extremely sluggish.

But I differ with those who see this as the beginning of the end of the recovery. The saving grace for demand and output next year will be precisely the factor which the Chancellor most abhors — rising real wages. With basic settlements running at 6-6½ per cent and delayed pubic sector pay deals having artificially depressed average earnings for much of this year, the growth in *recorded* earnings in 1985 (including overtime and other wage drift) could easily top 9 per cent. Meanwhile, recent movements in unit labour costs and import prices indicate that, at the very worst, price inflation will be held at 5-6 per cent. It does not take a genius to see that real living standards will be rising fast; that this could be boosted further by income tax cuts; and that employed people are in the mood to spend. Provided the miners' strike is over by then, 3 per cent real growth in the economy could easily be restored next year — there is certainly still plenty of spare capacity to supply the rising demand.

While I would therefore sympathise with the Chancellor's output forecasts, I immediately part company with him on his interpretation of these trends. Rather than representing a miraculous recovery from recession, the growth rate we are observing is simply a reflection of the depth of the recession into which the UK fell in 1980/81. Some years of positive growth with low inflation were made almost inevitable by the unprecedented margin of spare capacity which existed in early 1981 — and the process was greatly helped along by the significant easing of fiscal and monetary policy which occurred in the 1982/83 pre-election period.

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But these years of recovery have yet to take output anywhere near the levels which would have been reached if pre-1979 trends had continued, still less to the above-trend levels needed to compensate for the production losses suffered in the early years of this administration. Furthermore — and this is the crucial point — the recovery has not only failed to boost full-time employment, it has actually made the problem of recorded unemployment even worse.

Since 1981, growth in productivity has comfortably out-stripped growth in output, so employment is still 700,000 lower than it was when GNP hit rock bottom. Even in the latest year, when total employment has risen, not a single extra full-time job has been created: all of the increase has come in the part-time sector, where employers can hedge their bets by being in a position to shed labour rapidly again.

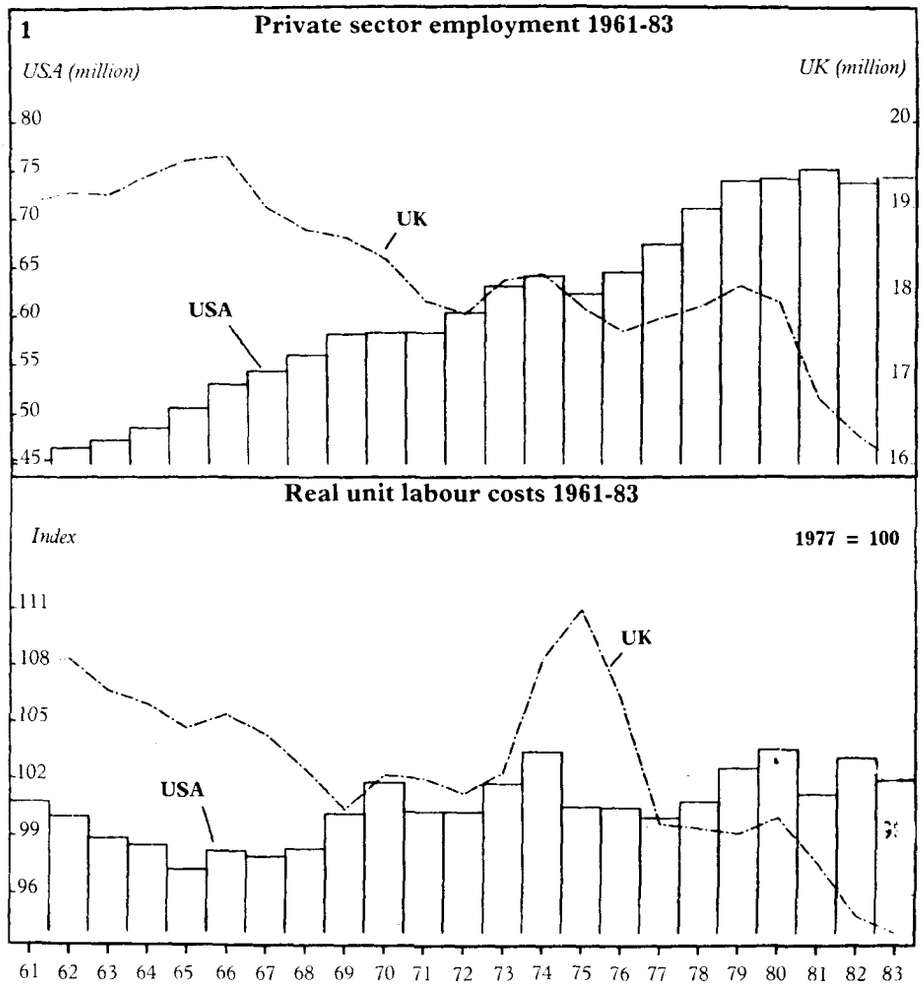
The hard-core of long-term unemployed, which is mainly male and unskilled, has been barely touched; and the merest sniff of a job has been enough to induce hundreds of thousands of discouraged workers to re-join the labour force after years spent among the unrecorded unemployed. Instead of providing the Chancellor with a valid excuse for the fact that unemployment is rising, this increase in the labour force merely exposes the full extent of the unrecorded jobless reservoir which had previously lain hidden.

A dawning public realisation that the problem of unemployment looms larger than ever partially explains the suddenly increased salience of unemployment as a political issue — despite the rising output trend. The remaining, and major, part of the explanation lies in the fact that the government has been at pains to explain that it can and will do nothing significant about it. Unless real wages stop growing, Mr Lawson now says, unemployment cannot fall.

IT WOULD be all too easy for those of us who do not share the Chancellor's economic philosophy simply to dismiss, or even ridicule, this line of argument. Can he not see that it is rising real wages which are boosting consumption in 1984/85, prolonging the recovery and saving jobs? Does he not recognise that econometric attempts to establish a systematic link between real wages and the number of jobs have traditionally been doomed to failure?

It would be easy, but wrong, to indulge in such ridicule. The lessons of the spread of monetarist theories in the 1970s indicate that such lazy refutation is insufficient, when the tide of intellectual thinking is on the move for a new (or even an old) idea.

The Chancellor clearly believes that the intellectual tide is moving his way on the 'real wage' debate — and he could just be right. It is not enough to deny that high real wages cost jobs, using the argument that increased wages boost consumption and, therefore, increase overall demand. The Chancellor could reply that, in all except the short-run of a year or two, a shift in the distribution of income towards wages and away from profits merely produces a reduction in company investment and stock-building which offsets any gain made by consumption — thus leaving total demand unchanged. (Recent Treasury research on the link between company profits and expenditure would seem to support this view.) Rising real wages, Mr Lawson could add, could reduce employment even while leaving aggregate demand unchanged, through encouraging a substitution in production techniques of capital equipment for relatively expensive labour.

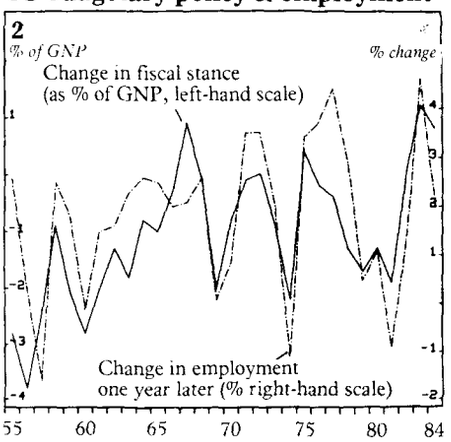


For most of the post-war period, empirical research in Britain and other countries has failed to detect this latter link at work. It has found no clear relationship between real wages and total employment. More recently, however, some empirical support for Mr Lawson's analysis has come from an unexpected quarter — the Centre for Labour Studies at the London School of Economics. New econometric work by Symonds and Layard seems to have uncovered a link between real wages and employment in the manufacturing sectors of Britain and five other developed countries over the period 1956-80.

For Britain, the authors calculate that a 1 per cent reduction in real labour costs produces a rise of about 2 per cent in total employment over a period of several years. Furthermore, they find that demand and/or policy variables (such as taxes and government spending) have no significant effect on employment — unless real labour costs are changed.

These results will no doubt be replicated shortly by Treasury econometricians, but they should not be accepted as uncontroversial. Previous well-known work — for example by Geary and Kennen of McMaster University in Canada — had completely failed to find any clear relationship between labour costs and jobs. The LSE researchers say that this is because previous work had failed to make proper allowance for variables other than demand and labour costs, which can affect jobs (notably changes in raw material costs). Add these variables in, they say, and the wages/jobs link is clearly uncovered.

US budgetary policy & employment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% of GNP
% change
Change in fiscal stance
(as % of GNP, left-hand scale)
Change in employment
one year later (% right-hand scale)
55 60 65 70 75 80 84

OTHER WORK along similar lines, however, fails to go all the way with the LSE researchers. While Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard University does find an international relationship between labour costs and jobs, he also discovers that this relationship cannot explain the full increase in unemployment which has occurred across the world since 1979. In order to explain this, Sachs says, you need to make allowance for the tightening in monetary policy which most governments introduced in 1979/80.

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Some of the secular rise in unemployment over the past two decades seems to have been caused by an increase in wages at the expense of profits, but the rise in the last five years has had more to do with a general tightening in government policy to squeeze out inflation. Now that this has been accomplished, Sachs predicts, a more expansionary government policy could create jobs without re-generating inflation.

This prediction has recently been borne out in the United States, where periods of expanding fiscal policy have always been closely associated with job creation. (See Graph 2 on p. 9 which I have purloined from my colleague David Morrison. Expansionary budget moves are depicted by upward moves in the 'fiscal stance' line.)

In fact, the link between fiscal policy and jobs in the US is much closer than that between real labour costs and jobs. Graph 1 shows that the US record on real unit labour costs in the past 20 years has in fact been slightly worse than that in Britain, but their employment record has been vastly superior. Mr Lawson's simple comparison between British and American labour costs and jobs fails to hold water.

The truth is that high wages and low profits can in some circumstances cost jobs, but that the main employment killer in Europe at present is a deficiency of demand caused by a prolonged period of very tight fiscal and monetary policy. A shift in European policy would not only relieve unemployment caused by deficiency of demand, but would also be the quickest way to boost profits and to create jobs via that route, too.

Meanwhile, the Lawson demand straitjacket *might* force some low-paid workers eventually to price themselves into jobs by accepting still lower wages, but *his* process is likely to be nasty, brutish and anything but short. □

Gavyn Davies is chief UK economist at stockbrokers Simon & Coates.

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LIVERPOOL

COUNCIL AND THE CAUCUS

Ian Williams, a member of the Labour Party in Liverpool, gives his account of the council decisions which are swinging blacks and the 'soft left' against the new 'city bosses'

RECENT EVENTS in Liverpool have had the leadership of the city Labour party, especially Deputy Leader Derek Hatton, in his self-appointed role as PR man for the council, performing a serpentine series of U-turns.

In a week when the Liberal opposition had already accused him of nepotism in his appointment of a new chauffeur, and when he was involved in offering and then withdrawing a plan to make the jailed Cammel Lairds workers freemen of the city, he was also at the centre of an undignified battle over the appointment of a £14,000 per year head of the ten staff of the new Race Relations unit. The scale of the problems it must tackle can be gauged by the ferocity of the Toxteth 'riots' in 1981.

In accordance with Labour policy, Nalgo, the union involved, had a representative to observe the interviews for the job, while three members of the Liverpool Black Caucus, which is a consortium of community groups covering the varied ethnic minorities as well as the many Liverpool-born blacks, were present with voting rights.

Among the short-listed candidates were four people already involved in race relations work in Liverpool, and another who holds a similar position in a Labour-controlled authority in the West Midlands. The sixth was Sampson Bond, a 26-year-old engineering student who was born in Gambia but has been in Britain since 1962, and now works as the Assistant Building Surveyor for Brent council. The Black Caucus, and the Nalgo representative, say they found his interview the least satisfactory of the six, especially on his lack of managerial experience to head such a unit. They believed that any other of the five candidates was more suitable, but that Bond, who had been short-listed at the insistence of Militant supporter Hatton, was not only inexperienced in management and in dealing with the complexities of the Liverpool situation, but also had no demonstrable record of involvement in race relations work. His qualification was that he promised to carry out Militant's version of a race relations policy.

When the six voting Labour Councillors on the committee decided unanimously that Bond was the man for the job, the Nalgo representative walked out, as did the three from the Black Caucus and the sole Liberal Councillor on the panel. The next day a picket and occupation of Derek Hatton's office produced a spectacular climbdown as the councillors involved signed an agreement to withdraw the appointment and readvertise the position. 'I was not threatened. There were a lot of people there, and we had to take notice of their strong feelings', Hatton declared afterwards.

The following day a crowded District Labour Party meeting hotly debated and, after two hours, passed an emergency resolution from the Executive Committee, instructing the councillors to withdraw their withdrawal and to reaffirm their original appointment. The resolution went on to attack the Black Caucus as unrepresentative, even though it was Labour which had invited them to have representatives on the appointment committee, and to deplore the intimidation and threats of violence alleged to have been used by the demonstrators. Veterans of some of the most ferocious picket lines in recent industrial history now claimed that they had been terrified by the threat of violence and that the agreement was extracted under duress.

Ian Williams

The news that Liverpool Nalgo's Finance and General Purposes Committee was going to boycott the position brought a hasty amendment to the resolution saying that Bond should still be reappointed but 'after consultation with the unions'. Union representatives, however, did not welcome this style of consultation.

Quite apart from the dubiety surrounding the appointment itself, many felt that if it *was* right then the councillors, who have been crowing about their courage in the face of Thatcher, should have stood their ground, but that once they *had* signed the pledge to readvertise they should honour it.

Now the city's Joint Shop Stewards' Committee has endorsed Nalgo's boycotting of

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the position on the grounds that it had, in the words of a G&MBAT steward 'been boxed off', or as a Nalgo officer more elegantly put it, that there had been 'collusion in advance to secure the appointment for a less-qualified candidate.'

The novel feature for Liverpool is that the incident has inflamed the feelings of left-wing non-Militant supporters to the extent that they are now prepared to break ranks, despite their usual instinctive solidarity and loyalty to their leaders. While, privately, Militant supporters will say 'Sam Bond is one of ours', Bond himself says only 'I am in general agreement with some of their policies.' Whatever his political sympathies, those of the council have led them into a series of inept and embarrassing gyrations which have overstepped 'soft' Labour tolerance.

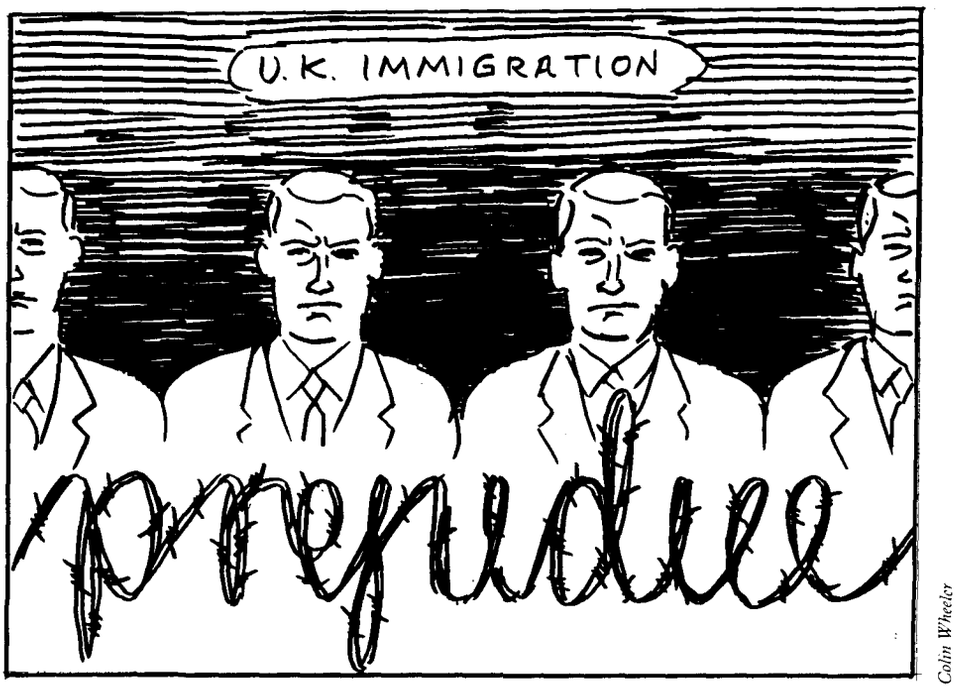
Significantly all the Labour wards which house most of the black community have voted to support the stand of the Caucus and unions. Liverpool Trades Council is also supporting Nalgo's version.

Before the tolerance snapped, seeds of doubt about the Council's form of socialism were sowed by their housing policy. Just after the local election victory, a complete moratorium was declared on all existing finance for schemes in order to take stock of the situation, but, somehow, the issue was then transmuted into a matter of principle that Council housing under municipal bureaucrats was socialist and anything else was a capitalist deviation. Some of the co-ops were given the go-ahead, as long as they were put under the management of the Housing Department; but the principle of co-operatively owned and managed housing has been rejected.

The threatened demolition of the Pius X school, which the Vauxhall ward wants for a community centre, and the appropriation for housing of land in Granby ward earmarked for a playground were two consequences of the drive for more council housing at all costs, despite the wishes of existing communities. But perhaps the one which first alarmed the Black Community was the cancellation of the previously agreed River Avon Street Sheltered Housing Project for the elderly in the area.

IN GENERAL, a common feeling is that the Labour Group's leadership is beginning to act like the old 'city bosses' who thought the job of voters was to vote, and theirs was to make decisions. This would be in line with a Militant view of socialist planning. Those who disagree, like the opponents of Bond's appointment, will be branded as 'unrepresentative' and 'alien to the traditions of our movement'. If the leadership does want Tammany Hall-type politics in the city, they are well on the way to success. At a crowded meeting called by the Black Caucus last week, there were insistent calls for Black candidates and Black block votes to force a better deal out of whoever is in power.

While within the labour movement and from the voters there is overwhelming support for the overall line of the council, especially against the government, the first consequence of the affair will be that implementation of its policies will be scrutinised minutely. By the time of the next battle on rate-capping the 'natural' Labour voters will perhaps have more tangible reasons for backing the council's stand than some of them have been given so far. □



Colin Wheeler

KEEPING BRITAIN INSULAR

For seven months, Jolyon Jenkins worked as an immigration officer until he found the rule-bending and xenophobia intolerable. But, he argues, this reflects official policy

'NIGERIA is mainly ruled by people from the Yoruba tribe,' said the lecturer. 'And the thing about them is that they're arrogant and thick.' He had an example of Nigerian arrogance: they had the nerve to object to the French testing nuclear weapons in the Sahara.

The lecture was part of a six-week training course for new immigration officers. I was one of them. The speaker was an officer who had spent some months on a posting to Lagos, and he had strong views on Nigerians. We listened to an hour of Nigerian jokes, accent mimicry and sweeping racial generalisations. We learned that Nigerians were 'lazy', 'violent', 'dishonest', and 'incapable of logical thought'.

This was followed by advice on how to handle Nigerian passengers at immigration control. 'You can never take them at face value. If you see a Nigerian waiting in the queue you can be sure he's a liar. So always take them aside for special questioning. Apart from anything else they're good entertainment value. Make sure they don't sit too near your desk, though, because they'll sprawl all over it and pick their noses — and they stink.' We actually heard that classic chauvinism: 'They can't help it of course. It's their glands.'

Finally: 'Any questions?' I had one. 'Did you *enjoy* your posting to Lagos?' 'Oh yes,' he said reflectively. 'The water-skiing was great.'

THE LECTURE was particularly remarkable in view of an exchange that had occurred in the House of Commons a few days earlier (24 January 1984):

> Mr Deakins asked the Secretary of State for the Home Office what measures he takes to ensure that immigration officers are free from racial prejudice.
>
> Mr Waddington: Immigration officers are required by the immigration rules to carry out their duties without regard to the race, colour or religion of those seeking to enter the United Kingdom . . .[This] . . .is underlined during initial training, and elements of specific race relations training, now included in some courses, are being developed for a wider range of courses.

The only specific race relations training we received consisted of crude racial characterisations and saloon-bar anthropology. 'Pakistanis are prone to forgery.' 'Never trust an Arab.' 'Indians are always touchy.' 'The thing about Moslems is that they don't consider it a sin to lie to an infidel.'

This is one of the ways we were taught to detect a 'bogus returning resident'. If you see a black face in the queue first see whether the passenger speaks English. A difficult thing to do without appearing to discriminate. The answer? 'As soon as you see Rasta waiting there you start talking to all the people in front of him, asking them if they've had a pleasant journey and so on.' (White readers might care to glance over their shoulder next time an immigration officer exchanges pleasantries with them.) 'Then when the black one reaches you you can't be accused of singling him out.'

All this would appear merely to confirm the accusation that immigration officers are racists. The truth is more complicated. Simple racism — the type the National Front propagates — is

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pretty rare. Not many immigration officers object to people *solely* on the basis of their colour. They are perfectly civil to black American visitors, and reasonably polite to legally resident West Indians. Sensational claims that the immigration service is staffed by fascists are inaccurate and, worse, counter-productive. Immigration officers have become so used to what they see as unjustified personal attacks that they have become immune to quite justified criticism of the *service*, and believe that it and they can do no wrong.

My case is that they administer an unjust system unjustly, that they develop intolerant attitudes because that is what is expected of them, and that they are as much victims as villains.

SIMPLE statistics point to the racism inherent in the system. A Ghanaian has about a one in 30 chance of being refused entry to the UK (at a port of entry); a Moroccan one in 40; a Bangladeshi one in 80. An American has a one in 4,000 chance; a New Zealander about one in 4,500; a Canadian about one in 7,800.

What lies behind these figures? There is personal racism on the part of some immigration officers, but it is rare. There is a deliberate bias in the immigration rules in favour of white people — for example the rule allowing Commonwealth citizens with a grandparent born in the UK to come and go as they please; or the rules that discriminate against arranged marriages.

As well as discriminatory rules, there are the operational methods of the system which single out certain nationalities as presenting an 'immigration risk'. During an officer's training there are constant exhortations to beware of nationals of those countries where (it is held) there is 'pressure to emigrate' — in practice, people with brown or black skins — because (it is held) they do not return home.

In fact, no one really knows if this is true, because no proper records are kept. A passenger's arrival and departure are recorded (in the case of visitors, who make up the vast majority) if the admitting officer has doubts about his or her intentions to leave Britain. And because of the training, officers are suspicious only of supposedly 'pressure to emigrate' nationals. So the system reinforces itself — the Home Office has no real idea how many American visitors overstay their time limits, because no records are kept of their arrival. The 'pressure to emigrate' criterion is effectively racist. A white Zimbabwean who could be under *genuine* pressure to emigrate will usually be admitted on the nod.

The truth is the Home Office cares very little about illegal white immigration. All the same, most immigration officers would be delighted to refuse a white American, because it is so much more challenging than refusing a Nigerian. At the ports, where control is exercised, the concern is not *just* to keep out black people, but to exclude everyone who does not conform to the establishment's ideas of respectability. Thus young white passengers with rucksacks and long hair can expect to be rigorously questioned. An index is kept of 'Euroscroungers' — EEC nationals who have (quite legally) claimed supplementary benefit here. During my service an inspector apparently on his own initiative issued a circular warning us that Spanish women suspected of going to Greenham Common should be thoroughly examined and admitted only after reference to him. The immigration service and Special Branch liaise closely with each other in the monitoring of the movements of British political dissidents (of the Left, naturally).

GENERAL intolerance is more pervasive than racial prejudice. It is impossible to stay long in the service without adopting these attitudes, one reason being that the job is very, very boring. For the most part you are a mere passport-stamper. A machine could do the job better, and most passengers treat immigration control like a supermarket checkout: in the eyes of your clients you have very little status. Many officers are quite highly educated and resent this. It is very tempting to lay aside the stamp and hurl yourself into a thorough examination of the passenger's personal circumstances — just to get away from the desk.

As you do the job, day after day, your conception of what you are doing changes. The very *purpose* becomes to keep out Moroccans, or Indians, or hippies. Your own attitudes harmonise with the unstated aims of British immigration policy, and you develop a more general political outlook. I never met a single immigration officer who did not feel that we were 'letting in too many foreigners'. The usual clichés abounded: 'There are some areas of London where you can hardly see a white face.' 'How many more people can we allow onto this tiny crowded island?' (Net emigration has exceeded net immigration for many years, as immigration officers should know.) 'It's come to a fine state of affairs when we get schools' radio in Gujerati', one chief immigration officer fumed to the office after failing to tune in to his favourite show.

Morale is exceptionally low among rank-and-file officers. As the self-conceived poor bloody infantry of the service they feel that their efforts are continually being undermined by woolly liberals at the top. The very people who deported Afia Begum are thought of as being *too soft* on immigrants. Even well-founded claims to political asylum are treated with the deepest cynicism. (I well remember a refugee from Iran who had been imprisoned and tortured by the Khomeini regime. He was eventually admitted on the instructions of the Home Office, to the disgust of my colleagues.) A chief immigration officer told us trainees, 'In my opinion there's no such thing as political asylum', and we were told that in some cases it was best to hum loudly to avoid hearing such claims.

Time and again I heard the complaints: 'They're playing the system!' It means no more than that immigrants are using the law to fight their cases. What immigration officers never realise is that the most formidable players of the system are themselves. They make full use of their many legal powers and non-legal tricks to exclude passengers they dislike. For example, one of the first questions an officer will ask a 'pressure to emigrate' visitor is 'Do you have any friends or relatives in Britain who you might stay with?' The passenger says no. The officer then searches the passenger's bags (as authorised in the 1971 Immigration Act) in the hope of discovering an address book or a scrap of paper with an address in Britain written down. He then has evidence that the passenger has lied, and can 'get him on credibility' — the reasoning being that once the passenger has lied there is no reason to believe anything he says.

The language barrier can be used as a weapon. Even large ports have only a few interpreters, and most have none at all. Frequently tired and confused passengers are examined in an unfamiliar language. Often unqualified interpreters are used — tour leaders, perhaps — who are generally inadequate. Getting hold of a proper interpreter could mean detaining the passenger overnight, so often the officer makes do without. I have witnessed examinations where it was perfectly obvious that the passenger did not really know what was going on. It becomes easy for an unscrupulous officer to twist answers round, to expose 'contradictions' in what he perceives the passenger's answers to have been. Even conscientious officers can make mistakes.

Passengers can be referred to the port doctor for examination, and not a few eccentric or recalcitrant passengers have been referred in the hope that they can be certified as suffering from a 'mental disorder' and be refused entry. The idea that a GP can diagnose such a nebulous complaint after half an hour's examination, in a foreign language, is laughable — but it happens.

Immigration officers realise that sometimes it is best not to ask too many questions, or the 'conspiracy' they are uncovering may start to disappear. A phone call to the passenger's relatives can often clear up misunderstandings, but I have seen it not done. (Officers often do not want the relative to know that the passenger is in the country in case they contact their MP. If the MP makes representations to the Home Office, removal has to be deferred.) Under the immigration rules, a passenger may telephone friends, but some officers deliberately avoid showing him how to dial the right number. (The one the passenger has is for dialling from abroad.) Officers are not supposed to listen to these phone calls; they usually do.

THERE ARE many other such tricks and dodges of dubious legality and morality which made me resign my post after seven months. These methods and attitudes are not just regrettable aberrations on the part of junior officials. The whole thrust of the immigration policies of successive governments has been to keep people out, and to ensure that those who are admitted are white. Ann Dummett has argued in *A New Immigration Policy* that we have never *had* an immigration policy; just an exclusion one. Unlike the USA, no thought has been given to the beneficial aspects of immigration: the economic benefits have been ignored, while the unfounded notion that 'immigrants take away our jobs' has been allowed to persist. Instead of attacking the terms in which the debate is posed the Left have themselves 'played the numbers game', and have fought each new restriction on an ad hoc basis.

It is hardly surprising, then, that these attitudes have filtered down to the lower levels of the administration, with the result that immigration officers see themselves as the front-line against the coloured hordes, who are hell-bent on trying to enter Britain, and who must be repelled with equal determination. □

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HOW MAXWELL GOT THE *MIRROR*

What happens when a conventional company in pursuit of profits (Reed) meets a man who wants to reform the world of newspaper management (Clive Thornton) with the support of an organisation that opposes press barons and dishonourable financial deals (the Labour Party)? Answer: Robert Maxwell buys the *Daily Mirror*, while the Labour Party smiles on. Christopher Hird unravels the story of how an attempt at reform in Fleet Street was killed

LATE ONE afternoon last July, Clive Thornton — then chief general manager of the Abbey National Building Society — received a visit from a Mr Carpenter. Thornton had no idea who the man was, but he had allowed his secretary to arrange the appointment as a personal favour to Louise Botting — a financial journalist, presenter of the BBC's Moneybox programme and friend of Carpenter's.

Carpenter was, in fact, chief executive of Reed International, a major British company with interests in paper and packaging of every sort, including the Mirror group of newspapers. For several years Reed had wanted to sell Mirror Group Newspapers, with its flagship the *Daily Mirror*. Having milked it of as much cash as they reasonably could, the beast was now dry; with its formal support for the Labour Party and intractable union problems, it looked a rather embarrassing member of the Reed conglomerate's herd of businesses.

Reed had a problem however: because of — among other things — Reed's less than inspiring stewardship of Mirror Group Newspapers — the company was not an immediately attractive investment. Although any of a clutch of aspiring press barons would be interested in buying the *Mirror*, the Reed board feared the political outcry, possibly supported by their own print unions. Labour's only friend in Fleet Street could not simply be sold off to the highest bidder.

Such considerations had always defeated Reed in their search for a rewarding but respectable way of getting rid of the *Mirror*. But early in 1983 things changed: the board of Reuters — the news and information agency — decided to float the now highly profitable company on the stock exchange.

Reed saw its chance: by leaving their Reuters' shares in Mirror Group Newspapers, they could make the company valuable enough to launch on the Stock Exchange too. Instead of a single press baron, there would be a range of shareholders and Reed's corporate coffers would be replenished. All they needed was someone to run the company — acceptable to the City, acceptable to the *Mirror's* employees and acceptable to the Labour Party.

A possible short-list was drawn up by Tony Miles, then in charge of the Mirror management and Thornton's name was on it. Carpenter took the list home with him one evening and showed it to Louise Botting, with whom he lives. She supported Thornton and suggested she arrange for the two men to meet. They could only fit in a fifteen minute meeting. Carpenter offered Thornton the job there and then. Thorton, rather surprisingly, accepted it.

TO THOSE UNVERSED in the intricacies of high finance, such a way of recruiting a new chairman may seem haphazard. It set in train a series of conflicts over methods of managing and owning the newspaper which Reeds eventually resolved by ditching the chairman they had appointed and selling out to a single high-bidding proprietor. Their decision, which contradicted all the assurances they had given about the *Mirror's* future, has at no point been challenged by the Labour Party.

Thornton was an unusual choice for a company looking for a quiet, uncontroversial disposal of its national newspapers. From a working-class Tyneside family, Thornton left school at 14 years and took 20 years — working as a clerk during the day and studying at night school afterwards — to qualify as a solicitor. He once described building societies as the highest form of socialism on the curious grounds that their only function was to act as agents between borrowers and lenders. Yet, if he had voted in 1983, he would have voted Tory, as they were the only party capable of forming a government. He served on Heseltine's inner city initiative in Liverpool, but is withering in his criticism of all the other financial institutions who went there, all of whom promised their support but have done nothing since. It is less his party politics that distinguishes him than his sense of management's social responsibility — and the City's failure to assimilate him into its conventions.

Thornton shared Reed's public commitment to floating off the Mirror Group as an independent company. His job, therefore, was to make the *Mirror* as attractive a proposition as possible for sale to shareholders, who would safeguard the *Mirror's* independence. Among other things this would mean getting rid of unnecessary expenditure. In theory, this is what Reed wanted, too. In practice, as Thornton devised his plans, they frustrated him.

One of the most astounding discoveries Thornton made was the contract that the paper had with the Thomson Organisation to print the *Mirror* in Manchester. Under its terms, the *Mirror* was liable for the redundancy pay of the Thomson printers who produced the *Mirror* — even if it was Thomson who cancelled the contract. That is exactly what they did. Potentially, this could cost the *Mirror* £35 million.

It was an extraordinary contract for the previous management to have drawn up and could considerably reduce the value of the company on floatation. Thornton's plan was to renegotiate the contract with Thomson and, at the same time, set up a brand new Mirror-owned printing plant in Manchester.

It was a solution which would allow the *Mirror* to expand. The extra capacity would make it possible to modernise the London plant so that the *Mirror* could be the first tabloid with colour. In addition Thornton planned to start at least one new title.

But Thornton knew that he could not achieve this unless he had a deal with the unions. He believed, naively in the view of many — that if he explained the financial implications of his scheme to the print workers — they would listen and behave differently.

WHAT THORNTON wanted from the unions was this: an agreement to abandon the automatic replacement of staff and an undertaking not to disrupt production outside of established agreements. This, he told them, would help generate the funds to embark on his expansion programme.

If he could clinch this agreement, and the plans for expansion before the flotation, investors would be encouraged that the *Mirror* had a good future. But to ensure that the potential was not exploited by anyone else Thornton wanted to make it impossible for the company to be taken over. He proposed to give a major stake in the company to the workforce and had a vision of a company owned to a significant extent by tens of thousands of small shareholders — *Mirror* readers. Among the cascade of ideas he produced was a form of unit trust in which readers could invest as little as £50 and instead of receiving dividends, get a discount on their paper bill.

All this was too much for Reed, who were wedded both to getting as much money as possible from the *Mirror* — and to defending their existing management practice. After two months, at a meeting with Reed's chairman, Sir Alex Jarrett, their chief executive, Les Carpenter and finance director, Kenneth Morton, Jarrett warned Thornton that even to talk about 'no distruption agreements' and non-replacement of staff could stop the papers. 'I must tell you that we and others have tried these things before and no one has succeeded in getting these unions to agree. I think you underestimate the resistance to anything of this kind. We would rather you left any ideas of that kind for after the flotation'.

In fact, Thornton found the unions very

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Camera Press

Guardian

Leslie Carpenter (top left) first offered the job to Clive Thornton (top right). But in the end Reed's chairman presided over the deal that gave the Mirror Group to Robert Maxwell

receptive to his ideas. Undoubtedly, this was partly because of his style. He ate in the staff canteen; he launched a purge on senior management expenses and champagne binges at the races. This endeared him to the unions, long accustomed to being treated as the sole cause of Fleet Street inefficiency and high costs. Thornton also talked at length to the union representatives in London, Manchester and Glasgow, explaining his strategy. Brenda Dean, general secretary-elect of Sogat '82, says that this was the first time that some of her members had ever met a senior *Mirror* manager.

After six months Thornton had made real progress. To the astonishment of many, he secured the no disruption agreement he wanted and which Reed had told him was impossible. Significantly, the written undertaking by the unions was given to him personally and specifically excluded Reed and Maxwell.

REED WAS NOT just hostile to Thornton's approaches to the unions. Les Carpenter, who handled the flotation on behalf of the Reed board, opposed the plan to open a new plant in Manchester and to introduce new web offset printing machinery in London. Carpenter thought that Thornton had just been 'hijacked' by an entrenched group of managers at the *Mirror*.

Reed stopped Thornton from cutting the price of the *Mirror* by 1p to the *Sun*'s 16p. Although Thornton did not believe that price parity was the solution to the *Mirror*'s problems, most people at the *Mirror* did. The only way they would find out 'that much more was wrong than the price' says Thornton, was 'by trying it on'. Reed also opposed the idea of new titles and eventually stopped Thornton talking about his plans in the press and prevented him from explaining his strategy to institutional investors. Thornton was turning a commercial transaction — the discreet flotation of a company to make profits — into a public crusade.

As for Reed's public declarations that it wanted a strong independent company, it took Thornton months to persuade Reed to put a clause into the company's articles of association — its rules of operation — restricting any shareholder from holding more than 15 per cent of the shares for the first two years of the company's life. Within 48 hours of Reed agreeing to this, Maxwell made his first offer for the newspapers.

THERE WERE ten days between Maxwell's first offer to buy the Mirror Group — over the phone to Leslie Carpenter on Sunday 1 July — and his final success at midnight on 12 July. Throughout that time Reed's public position was unchanged: it opposed the Maxwell offer and was going ahead with the flotation.

This posture looked extremely convincing: as late as Tuesday 10 July Sir Alex Jarrett had lunch with Thornton, plus the two men he planned to have as non-executive directors of the new company. The flotation was still on. And even *after* he had shaken hands with Maxwell on the sale — but before they had signed — Jarrett told Brenda Dean that they had not sold out.

Why did Reed go back on its undertaking not to sell to a single buyer? And why did it dissemble so much about its change of mind? The answer, in a word, money. At the time, the public defence of Reed's behaviour was that it had no choice: it had an obligation to its shareholders to accept the Maxwell offer, which was worth twice what it could hope to get from a public flotation. Indeed, it was claimed that Reed was under heavy pressure from its shareholders to accept this offer. This is not true. Not one of the institutional shareholders contacted Reed, and although several had expressed anxiety in several comments to the press there was no concerted campaign to get Reed to accept the Maxwell offer.

And on previous City form, if the Reed board had gone out and actively campaigned for the Thornton plan, the institutions would probably have gone along with them. But Leslie Carpenter had no inclination to do this. He simply didn't believe in Thornton's plans. Anyway a campaign would delay the flotation. Like the alternative possibility of a 'de-merger' (where Reed shareholders would be given shares in the new company) it would mean no money in Reed's coffers. Furthermore, a public discussion on the flotation, or the Thornton plan, or Robert Maxwell, was exactly what they did not want. The trade unions and the Labour Party might join in. By the time Reed admitted that it was taking Maxwell's offer seriously, it had irrevocably sold out to him. Opposition then seemed pointless.

THE LABOUR leadership completely

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misunderstood Reed's dilemma. After Maxwell made his first offer, the shadow trade and industry spokesman, Peter Shore, spoke to Reed. He then told Kinnock that the Labour Party was powerless to interfere in a company's obligations to its shareholders.

Back in February Kinnock had feared that the *Mirror* would swing to the SDP under Thornton — not an unreasonable fear, as Thornton is friendly with Bill Rodgers. But after a dinner at the Savoy with Thornton, Kinnock was reassured. He asked his deputy Roy Hattersley to keep an eye on the *Mirror*.

Hattersley turned for help to Charles Williams — a merchant banker and former Labour candidate, whom Hattersley had appointed as chairman of the Price Commission in 1976. As the 'honest broker' and friend of the Labour Party, Williams went to see Thornton and Brenda Dean — who had also been on the Price Commission. But Williams was not disinterested: his bank had been Robert Maxwell's advisers for over fifteen years and he himself handled one of Maxwell's biggest recent deals. Did Hattersley know this?

According to Thornton, Williams told him that there was no threat from Maxwell as he couldn't afford to buy the papers. (Williams knew that Maxwell could, but denies this part of the conversation.) But both the Labour Party and Sogat '82 at least believed that Maxwell hadn't the money to buy the *Mirror*. To them his bid came as a surprise.

Even after the bid Kinnock's instincts were to fight Maxwell. He prepared a harshly critical press release. Hattersley saw it and told him it was a mistake: if Maxwell gets the papers you will have made an enemy; if he doesn't you will have made yourself a fool, was the gist of his advice. Whilst Kinnock anguished over what to do, Hattersley spoke to Williams, who agreed an attack on Maxwell would be an error.

A few minutes after Hattersley left Kinnock a call came through to Kinnock on his private line. It was Robert Maxwell. Clearly his legendary charm was at work: Kinnock changed the press release. It was so bland that no one noticed it. Maxwell got the *Mirror*. □

Christopher Hird works for Diverse Reports. A video of its programme on Maxwell's take-over, broadcast on 10 October, is available at cost for private use to bona fide *enquirers from Diverse Productions, 6 Gorleston Street, London W14 8XS.*

This England

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In Avon and Somerset, officers claimed that initials ASPOM on badges and sweaters worn by officers on picket duty stand for 'Avon and Somerset Police Operations Miner' and not 'Arthur Scargill Pays Our Mortgages'. — *Police Review* (Tom Sharratt)

"I have recently visited Mali, and can confirm that while the 'Voice of America' and Radio Moscow (as well as others) can be heard 'loud and clear', reception of the BBC is much poorer. This is very sad, I think, as Britain is ideally placed — now that she no longer has world power status — to put over what I would describe as the sane and rational point of view. — Letter in *Daily Telegraph* (J. J. Maling)

ECOLOGY

THE 'GREENING' OF THE NF

Sarah Benton and Rob Edwards examine how ecology politics relate to socialism, feminism and the extreme right

> The war which man is now waging against nature is not only foolhardy, it is downright dangerous. We can't go on polluting the atmosphere, we can't go on poisoning the sea, we can't go on slaughtering our wildlife for ever.

Admirable sentiments from an editorial entitled 'On the Green Front.' It continues:

> Modern man has been uprooted from the soil and placed in an artificial concrete world where he has become little more than a wage slave . . . The British people have forsaken the old way of life which was simple, but which conferred upon them happiness, fulfilment and, above all, freedom. In return they have adopted a way of life which is totally divorced from nature; a way of life in which the new gods are the latest car, the latest video machine and the latest computer game.

Well, it's rather sentimental and the use of 'man' to mean us all marks it out as rather old-fashioned ecology. But nostalgia for a past golden non-industrial age is a British tradition, given new meaning in recent years by being linked with a radical, ecological critique of industrial society. It's a critique which many socialists and feminists think must be a foundation stone for future politics.

But a new force has joined the ecology nexus. The quotations come from a recent issue of the National Front magazine, *Nationalism Today*. The editorial announces that alongside the Front's three ideological premises of social justice, racial purity and national sovereignty there is now a fourth — ecology ('the deep-rooted belief that man must again learn to live in harmony with the forces of nature instead of waging constant war against them'). As a result, the paper now gives regular coverage of ecological issues, for it is up to the National Front — and here is the give-away — 'to build up a Britain where the people are united by the eternal bonds of blood and soil.'

Among the issues the National Front has espoused have been — it could be the litany of any good leftist — the elimination of acid rain and of lead in petrol, an attack on the health hazards of nuclear power and the virtues of the Mondragon co-operative in Spain. According to the anti-fascist magazine *Searchlight*, this is all part of the 'radical nationalism' now in vogue amongst an influential faction within the Front. Its roots go back to Otto Strasser, a prominent nazi, and his friend G.K. Chesterton, the first chairman of the Front. At its heart is the idea that people should escape the corrupting influence of materialism by returning to the land and rediscovering its mystical regenerative powers — feudalism and the Knights of the Holy Grail revisited.

Where fascists have leapt, Conservatives too have trodden cautiously with a series of resolutions to their conference this year urging the government 'to take a positive initiative on ecological and conservation issues'. While the Left talks of William Morris and the tradition of a link between socialism and ecology, there is another history: of eugenics and a horror of the urban working class. Ecology can easily become the natural preserve of the radical right and the Ecology Party, according to one of its prominent members, could become 'the Conservatives of the future.'

THE BIRTH OF the environmental movement in Britain can be traced back to 1972 with the publication in January of a special issue of *The Ecologist* magazine, entitled 'A Blueprint for Survival'. It resulted directly in the foundation of the Ecology Party and provided a major boost to the two existing environmental pressure groups, Friends of the Earth and the Conservation Society. At the time, it seemed an immensely important document, but re-reading it now, over a decade later, is an unnerving experience.

In its obsession with population growth, resource depletion and environmentally induced social decay, it manages to skate over poverty and human rights. It accepts hierarchy as the natural order of things, lavishes praise on the nuclear family and is implicitly racist and sexist. In the transition to a new sustainable social system, it recognises that great 'restraint' will be required, pointing out that 'legislation and the operations of police forces and the courts will be necessary to enforce this restraint.' An eco-police state in the making.

The Green movement has changed much since then. Aided by the theoretical analyses of Schumacher, Illich, Commoner, Bahro and Gorz it has become more openly political, turning from conservation and population control to questions of energy, peace and the future of work. The campaign against nuclear weapons and power, ignored in 1972, has spawned new concerns about civil liberties and the control of power.

For all this new content, what is still remarkable about the Ecology Party as a party which has, in its own words, 'come of age' is what it leaves out. In its manifesto for the last general election it has nice policies on health, housing and education and ignores the issue of who owns such provisions. It warbles on about 'the spirit policy' and the need to fill industrial society's 'spiritual vacuum' by something called 'a spiritual democracy'. It is silent on actual State institutions.

According to the manifesto, change comes when we 'move from the politics of class interests to the politics of life interests' as if the battles between labour and capital can be spirited away. It is in essence a piece of political tight-rope walking, an attempt to appeal to both Left and Right by avoiding the contentious issues of ownership and class — a characteristic of conservatism. Anyway, impending catastrophic ecological and social collapse mean

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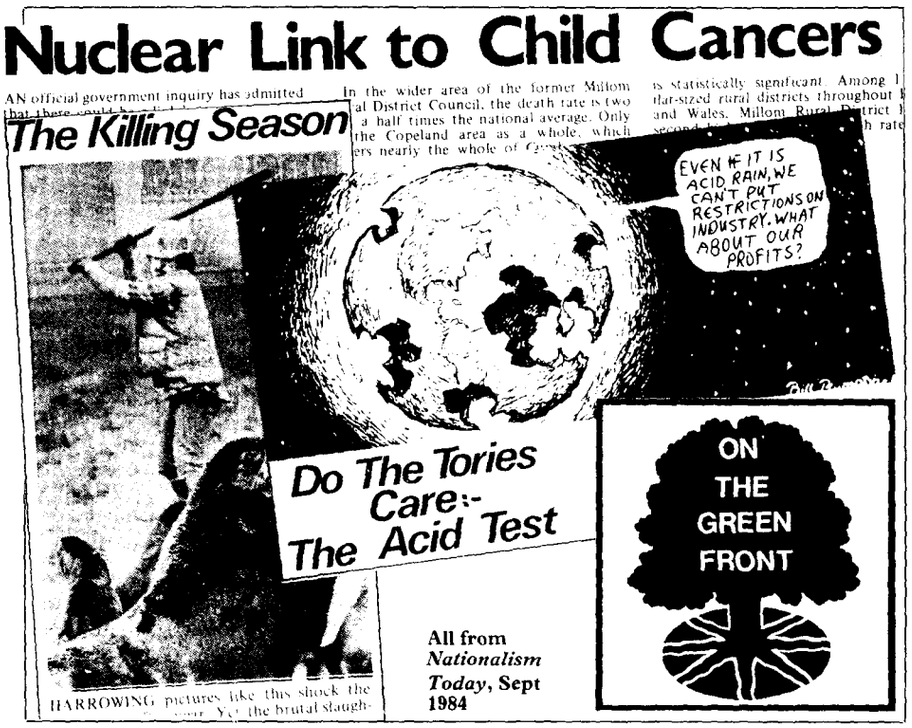
Nuclear Link to Child Cancers
AN official government inquiry has admitted
In the wider area of the former Millom
al District Council, the death rate is two
a half times the national average. Only
the Copeland area as a whole, which
is statistically significant. Among
The Killing Season
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Do The Tories Care:- The Acid Test
ON THE GREEN FRONT
All from Nationalism Today, Sept 1984
HARROWING pictures like this shock the

no real choices have to be made. 'Green politics' the manifesto concludes, 'is the art of persuading people democratically to accept the inevitable.'

OF COURSE, nothing is inevitable, not the ecological millennium nor the catastrophic destruction of the world. What is so striking about much of the advocacy of ecology is the resolute rejection of politics in the sense of dealing with a system of power which is operated by particular interests through definable institutions and networks. Without that, the proposed alternative and more democratic forms (the rotating MPs of the German Greens, the local roots and 'new actual societies' which Raymond Williams writes of in *Towards 2000*, the open gatherings of the women's movement) cannot replace what exists already.

For instance, the ecology movement, like every other, has to fight for its position on the terrain of the State. Amongst the power-operating bodies opposed to the ecological imperative are the monolithic Central Electricity Generating Board, the UK Atomic Energy Authority, the public enquiry system in Sizewell B alongside the wealthy landowners and the market drives of multinational companies like Rio Tinto-Zinc. The women's peace movement has been embattled with the Ministry of Defence, the bye-laws of Newbury Council, the High Court, the US Airforce and RAF at Greenham Common. And so it goes.

Yet much of the writing which attempts to link ecology with either socialism or feminism has all the hallmarks of mushy mysticism which the Right uses to disguise the actuality of political and economic power. For instance, one bold book, *Women for Life on Earth**, did attempt to make the links. But the key article, 'Feminism and Ecology: the Theoretical Connection' starts with some extremely dubious pseudo-science ('Scientists know that the natural tendency of life on Earth is to be female . . .'). Going on through some equally arguable psycho-science ('In terms of the polarity of the male and female principles, the urge to separate, to divide, to individuate is a masculine principle') we arrive at the theoretical connection:

> Ecology is universally defined as the study of the balance and interrelationship of all life on earth. The motivating force behind feminism is the expression of the feminine principle. As the essential impulse of the feminine principle is the striving towards balance and interrelationship, it follows that feminism and ecology are inextricably connected.

This is not going to convince anyone, however sympathetic, who does not already implicitly believe that both nature and women are manifestations of some sort of metaphysical balance. It reflects, however, the crucial historic changes in how urban humanity views 'nature'. Once it was a tremendous force to be worshipped, or a cruel and wayward energy to be appeased or harnessed. Industrialism began to change that and, as Raymond Williams points out, Marx seized on the specific activity of production, of turning raw materials into things, as *the* fundamental human activity. This view of the relation between human activity and natural resources became the socialist orthodoxy. Now, on the verge of destroying those resources and with industrialism no longer supreme, the relationship is being questioned again.

Unless natural resources are regarded as both neutral and material for the industrial world, ecological advocacy hovers perpetually on the edge of a thinking that is so attractive to the Right. And there is another uneasy connection between the ways that Right and Left argue for ecology. This is in the assumption that the existing values and skills of the oppressed — learned from oppression and opposition — can become the dominant values of a new society. Eco-feminism has honoured women as 'the voice of the invisible' and 'the keepers of the home and the community'. Different skills are needed to discover the plans of the CEGB or run a 'utopian' system of energy.

Fascism too is an ideology of the oppressed. It celebrates the violence which may be all that is left to the dispossessed, and the hatred of black people who threaten their 'natural' local roots (ecologists are strong on local roots). The ideology of the oppressed is not in itself an ideology for the progressive transformation of society.

None of this is to deny that a world which nurtured local roots, feminine values and natural resources could be a utopia — something infinitely to be desired and worked for. Rather it is to argue for a materialist understanding of natural resources and the primacy of politics in the discussion. An ecological socialist feminism is to be imagined and planned both because it can prevent the threatened destruction of life on earth and because it also serves the supremely important political values of liberty, equality and companionship. □

*Women's Press. Edited by Leonie Caldecott and Stephanie Leland.

PRISONS

SUICIDE IN CUSTODY

Robert Kilroy-Silk looks at the disturbing figures

SATNAM SINGH CHANA committed suicide this summer by hanging himself with his sheet in Pentonville Prison. It was a lonely and terrible way for a nineteen year-old to die. Last year 19 prisoners killed themselves by hanging. Another died after cutting his wrists with a razor blade. In two other cases of death through asphyxia by hanging, the inquest returned open verdicts.

Given the character of the prison population and the particular pressures of prison life, it might not be thought unusual or exceptional that there should be so many self-inflicted deaths. After all, even the most rational, sane, balanced and normal of persons experiences considerable stress when imprisoned — not least as a consequence of guilt, shame and remorse. There is little doubt also that imprisonment itself is a cause of many suicides.

Again, even leaving aside those prisoners who have been defined as mentally disordered within the terms of the 1959 Mental Health Act, who number several hundred on any one day, a high proportion of prisoners suffer from some form and degree of mental illness or handicap and could be said to have a greater propensity for self-injury and suicide. To them must be added several hundred who are problem drinkers and drug abusers, who, therefore, are in the suicide risk category.

All these make for a population that is difficult to treat and hard to control. Thus in 1982 some 214 persons were responsible for a total of 253 incidents of self-injury, described as having a suicidal intent. Another 784 prisoners were involved in 1,157 incidents of less serious self-injury. Altogether, it is estimated that 16

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per cent of the adult male population of our prisons have made an attempt at some time to take their own life.

Yet, that said, there are still good reasons to be concerned about the high incidence of suicide in prisons in England and Wales. To begin with, while the suicide rate in the rest of the community in 1982 was 5.6 per hundred thousand of the population, that behind the prison walls is a staggering 38.6. This is a considerable difference, even allowing for the additional problems and population of our prisons. Indeed, for some reason that has yet to be explained, the penal system of Northern Ireland has a much better record. Excluding hunger strikers, it has experienced only two suicides in the last ten years — one in 1974 and the other in March 1984. Scotland, on the other hand, performs even worse. The 26 suicides that have occurred in the last ten years give an average annual suicide rate of 54 per 100.000 inmates.

In contrast, the four special hospitals in England and Wales appear to be more successful in preventing suicide. Although the patients that inhabit Broadmoor, Moss Side, Park Lane and Rampton are as dangerous, disruptive and as mentally-disordered as any of those to be found within ordinary prisons, they seem to be managed more successfully. There have not been, for example, any suicides recorded at any of the four hospitals in either of the last two years.

This is not to suggest that the Home Office, the Prison Department, the prison medical officers and disciplinary staff are unmindful of the problems of potential suicides or unsympathetic to their needs. There are comprehensive circular instructions and standing orders that deal with every conceivable aspect of suicide in prison — from attempting to specify the type of person at risk and the circumstances when the risk is at its greatest, to the procedures that have to be implemented as well as the attitude and behaviour to be adopted by medical and other staff.

Yet in spite of these well-intentioned preventive measures, despite the fact that those identified to be at risk are located in the hospital wing and subjected to almost continuous observation, it is still the case that the number of suicides in prison is too high, that many with a propensity to suicide are not identified and that when identified are not always recorded.

This concern is shared by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, Sir James Hennessy. It was he who decided that his first general enquiry in the prison service would be into suicides.

But we need to go further than merely improving the preventive measures and medical help. It is not a medical problem. It cannot be solved by doctors. The answers to the abnormally-high prison suicide rate lie in ensuring that the mentally ill, the alcoholic and the drug dependent are properly cared for and treated in the community and not in the over-crowded and insanitary local prisons; in sending fewer to prison; and in ensuring that those who are imprisoned are contained in decent, civilised and humane conditions. □

Robert Kilroy-Silk is chairman of the Parliamentary All-Party Penal Affairs Group.

Fallout from the Brighton bomb

Mary Holland

LET'S START with a little self-flagellation. Why was a piece of mine in last week's *New Statesman*, about the IRA bomb in Brighton, headlined 'Ireland blasts back'? If one of the populars had run that even Tory MPs would have deplored it as misleading and racist, particularly if they had any Irish constituents.

One of the few encouraging aspects of the media's coverage of the attack on Mrs Thatcher's life was that almost every popular newspaper went to some pains to stress that a bomb planted by the Provisional IRA — even one directed at the beloved leader — should not automatically be identified with Ireland or the Irish community.

Ever since the Birmingham bombs of 1974, which provoked anti-Irish demonstrations in British cities, the automatic linking of the IRA's activities with Irish people as a whole has been a source of grave concern to the Dublin government. In recent years it's devoted considerable time and resources to educating the British media out of these attitudes and last week showed how the process had paid off. The *Daily Express* went out of its way to urge Mrs Thatcher not to be deflected from her friendly relations with Garret FitzGerald, or from any discussions going on with the Irish government.

Some of the 'qualities' showed less discretion. On the day after the bomb went off a leader in *The Times* instructed Fleet Street not to be sensational in covering terrorism, because 'terrorism is more concerned with publicity than with the tactical disciplines of war'. Difficult as it is for this jobbing journalist to bite a hand that feeds me — or at least provides a little jam from time to time — duty forces me to point out that the following Monday *The Times* carried on its leader page easily the most sensational coverage of the bomb attack. It was by Enoch Powell and suggested that the Irish government had been involved in the planting of the bomb at the Grand Hotel, and may even have planned it.

The former Tory MP, now a Unionist, began with the assertion that: 'In Dublin there is a seamless web which links respectable officialdom and politics with a decidedly unrespectable underworld.' They are joined in the desire for radical action on Northern Ireland. Given Mrs Thatcher's known distaste for the issue, only the death of public figures will galvanise the government. But won't it galvanise them to co-operate with Dublin to defeat the IRA? Mr Powell admits that this is a bit of a poser but explains 'the Provisionals and the Irish National Liberation Army do not always act as principals; they take on work for other interests too.' The IRA bomb, according to Powell, was planted by people who would like to see the forthcoming Thatcher/FitzGerald summit meeting bring much closer constitutional links between Ulster and the Irish Republic (anathema to him). Such connections are made in a world 'where governments and statesmen are prepared without scruple to see murder used, if necessary, for their ends'. Very Freddy Forsyth, or perhaps just very Rupert Murdoch.

Mercifully, most of the press were less concerned with seeking such Byzantine explanations for the bomb, much more interested in telling us about its effects. Of these the most immediate was the virtual canonisation of the Prime Minister, as the mother of the nation, a status which, in a recent TV interview, she happily accepted. The abject dependency revealed in some of the editorial comments showed an alarming national regression. The *Sunday Express* put it like this: 'Isn't there one overriding feeling that shines through the tragedy of that night? The joy and relief of knowing, when morning came, that this extraordinary woman was still at the head of the government'. What Queen Elizabeth II makes of this is not on record. But the perception that there is an unadmitted competiton going on between the Prime Minister and the Royal Family which this week's *Observer* claimed the PM was winning is currently one of the more intriguing features of the British media.

I'd been expecting a lot more in the Tory press, particularly the more rabid populars, linking the miners' strike in some unspecified way with the IRA bomb. Most of them desisted. True, the *Sun* lectured Gerald Kaufman about picket line violence by saying 'It is only through God's providence that in the miners' strike there have not been far more deaths than there were at the Grand Hotel', but that was in a week when 80 per cent of its readers were apparently baying for the return of the rope — though not yet for striking miners.

Once again it was left to an intelligent, presumably responsible weekly journal to make a connection which does not exist and should not ever have been hinted at. Last week the *Economist* ran an editorial on the Brighton bomb which contained these lines: 'In a proper democracy violence is unequivocally bad. Those who do not equivocate — including even Mr Neil Kinnock in his facile identification of miners' physical violence with the "violence of unemployment" — are a menace to democracy everywhere.'

To suggest that Mr Kinnock's quite proper defence of the miners' interests and their concern about unemployment is in some way comparable to the IRA bomb at Brighton isn't just an example of shoddy thinking. It's a slur which fouls the air of political debate. □

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DIARY

There's a saying among women that predates feminism: 'Beware of the prick with bulging eyes.' Those who watched the Booker award will know what it means. Cobb, antique chairman of the prize committee and retired Oxford history Professor, praised Anita Brookner for her 'microscopic vision', and her 18th-century style. He thus came as close as possible to giving the prize to himself. Yet by so doing he turned the disaster of the shortlist into a triumph, for now no one under the mental age of 90 could doubt that Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* is much better than the winner. A couple of diaries ago I said that Carter ought to win but wouldn't. With two Oxford dons on the jury along with the *Financial Times* literary editor and an MP who is a lackey of Callaghan there was no way, it seemed to me, that she could get a majority. All the same I presumed that they would short-list *Nights at the Circus*. Ballard, the best of those actually selected, tries yet fails to do for Shanghai what Kurt Vonnegut did for Dresden in *Slaughterhouse 5*; fails because he doesn't overcome the parochialism of the end of Empire. By contrast Carter sustains a wonderfully international and vulgar narrative, a love story in which a working gal from South London fucks an American reporter on the outskirts of a Siberian gulag, to herald the century itself.

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OK, Angela is a friend and I'm prejudiced in her favour, but I can argue the case. Brookner's 'prize-winning' novel, for example, opens with this sentence: 'From the window all that could be seen was a receding area of grey.' Dull, but not, you might think, completely without promise. Now take a deep breath and try the book's second sentence:

> It was to be supposed that beyond the grey garden, which seemed to sprout nothing but the stiffish leaves of some unfamiliar plant, lay the vast grey lake, spreading like an anaesthetic towards the invisible further shore, and beyond that, in imagination only, yet verified by the brochure, the peak of Dent d'Oche, on which snow might already be slightly and silently falling.

But then again it might not. Or take this passage which begins a paragraph on p. 107:

> But Mrs Pusey, for whom I was beginning to feel something like pity, horror, compassion [etc?], is an old hand at this game. Glasses of champagne were delivered to Monica and Mme de Bonneuil and myself, and then we all had to drink her health, and there was a certain amount of bobbing up and down and nods and becks and wreathèd [sic] smiles, most of which were cast about by Mrs Pusey herself.

People say I shouldn't dump on Brookner, she's a nice person and it's not her fault she won the prize. But today nobody writes like this except pretentious novelists. The imprecision and throttled rhythm here stink of the sweet decay of England. For the pleasure of contrast here are Carter's opening sentences:

> 'Lor' love you sir!' Fevvers sang out in a voice that clanged like dustbin lids. 'As to my place of birth, why, I first saw light of day right here in smoky old London, didn't I! Not billed as the "Cockney Venue", for nothing, sir . . .'

So if you want to wave a well deserved Harvey Smith at the tiny minds of Oxbridge and Parliament, buy your loved ones *Nights at the Circus*.

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Not that prizes are *really* the way to sell books. For this you just have to go to China. Peking recently released the selected speeches of Deng Xiaoping. In six months the volume sold 54 million copies . . . How could I resist buying one for myself when the English version appeared? It has a bust of Deng on the cover, and another Mao-style photo inside. It takes 341 pages to tell us that we must 'rectify such bad practices as decision-making by a single person who alone has the final say in all things'. An extract, although not, of course, for the 'quality' of its writing, should have been carried in the latest *Granta*, called 'After the Revolution'. Its burly young editor, one William Buford, known in my household with good reason as 'Bill The Bastard', has just received his apotheosis in *Time* magazine. There's even a picture of him trying to look serious. But burning resentment cannot prevent me from saluting *Granta*. True, its last issue was dominated by a load of old rubbish on the Stones, but the current number is quite fine — it even has a good piece by Brookner.

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On the eve of Thatcher's tenth speech to the

ROGER WODDIS

Sir Crawling Craven-Creecher

'It is always open to them to leave.' — Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe on the three South African anti-apartheid campaigners now under threat of eviction from the British consulate in Durban.

Sir Crawling Craven-Creecher,
Awake, and take a bow!
If there's a way to quibble,
You will discover how.
Your tongue is hung with velvet
And when you bend the knee,
It comforts countless millions
And cheers the Durban Three.

How high you throw your hands up!
How low you pitch your voice!
And how you sing the praises
Of democratic choice!
Though summary detention
Is something you deplore,
The thought of lost investments
Disturbs you even more.

The need to balance honour
Against the bursting till
Must test you to the utmost
And tax your iron will.
Your truest words, Sir Crawling,
However blandly trite,
Were when you spoke of getting
The balance 'about right'.

Conservative Conference as Party leader, and while the bomb was itself ticking away, *Newsnight* looked at some of Thatcher's previous star turns. It also interviewed past advisors on her technique. One, who looked remarkably like Sir Alfred Sherman, described how while her speeches were drafted Thatcher would do the cooking. Occasionally her voice could be heard from the kitchen complaining, 'I can't say that'. The informality and domesticity led him to conclude:

> Ataturk was the father of the Turkish nation. She is becoming the mother of the British nation.

My mouth lost its usual cynical curl and fell open. An image of Ataturk's vast Stalinist-style mausoleum in Ankara swam across my vision. I recalled the prophetic remark of a Turkish minister in the 1930s, who celebrated the reforms of the 'eternal leader' (as Ataturk was known) with a memorable observation: 'Foreigners are beginning to appreciate Turks: the Italians and Germans are copying us.'

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My immediate reaction — the surprise having stripped me of my cynicism — was that it was just over the top. In fact it must have been a plant; a planned and deliberate piece of massaging. To hold public support for Thatcher during the miners' strike they have launched operation 'apparent compassion'. The word has gone out that Thatcher is to be projected as a caring mummy who seeks merely to look after us all. Why do I think this? Nobody, but nobody talks of Thatcher as the mother of the nation. Many things may be said against the nation, but at least it got there before she did. Yet only four days after *Newsnight* Thatcher was asked in her Channel 4 interview whether she liked to be called 'The Mother of the Nation' more than her initial choice of 'The Iron Lady'. The Prime Minister was unsurprised by the question and agreed that 'Mother of the Nation' was indeed a 'lovely phrase'. All the same she said she preferred the idea of becoming the 'Grandmother of the Nation'! Not Ataturk this time, but Golda Meir. Such an answer could not have been off the cuff. From The Iron Matriarch to The Rusty Gran? I'm afraid Tory image makers will have to come up with something better. How about Eternal Leader?

Islander

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THE LAST COLONY IN AFRICA

For a decade the UN has been working for Namibian independence, but without getting the backing it needs from the US, the UK, and others. Denis Herbstein reports

'WHY HAS NAMIBIA'S independence taken so long?', a perplexed Italian journalist asked at a recent seminar. 'Compared with Palestine or Cyprus or Northern Ireland or Western Sahara, it is an easy one. The frontiers are fixed, there is a single, widely-supported liberation movement, the whole world condemns the South African occupation, and yet. . .' It was another of those United Nations get-togethers, this time in Geneva, with more mountains of paperwork, expensive air tickets and hotels.

Several factors are holding up Namibian independence, besides South Africa's unwillingness to get out. The American insistence on 'linkage' — Cuban troops out of Angola in exchange for a South African military withdrawal from Namibia — is a convenient excuse to delay. But long before Reagan invented the Cuban factor, other countries, notably Britain, were obstructing progress.

Ten years ago last month, the UN Council for Namibia, an administration-in-exile, promulgated Decree 1 for the protection of the colony's natural resources — a pronouncement intended to warn off multinational predators and ensure some pickings for the one and a quarter million natives, when their time eventually comes. While SWAPO waged its struggle on the political, diplomatic and armed fronts, the Decree was to be the spearhead of the economic thrust. But the Council for Namibia has been agonisingly slow to act.

The Decree, as with the establishment of the Council itself, was something new in international law. It opened up a minefield of knotty problems, behind which those countries friendly to South Africa — Britain, France, West Germany, the United States, Japan — have been happy to shelter. The West has largely ignored the Decree, so that hundreds of millions of pounds of uranium, copper, diamonds, fish, karakul (persian lamb) pelts, have been taken out, with only minuscule benefit to black Namibians.

With the mines owned by outsiders, profits are repatriated to shareholders in South Africa, Europe and America. Their taxes help finance Pretoria's war effort. There are indications that Harry Oppenheimer's Consolidated Diamond Mines are tapping the richest of the alluvial deposits and stockpiling the stones in London.

All the while, South Africa has been ransacking its 'fifth province', allowing vast amounts of money to be transferred to banks, building societies, pension and insurance companies in the Republic. And the expensive system of segregated administration, with each of the dozen race groups maintaining its own services, has placed a stifling burden on Namibia's resources.

The Decree, for all the refusal of Western governments to recognise its legality, appears to have had some affect on hard-headed companies. Four American oil firms abandoned exploration leases granted by South Africa, when it was reasonable to expect some finds on the continental shelf to the south of the Angolan oil fields. The American mining giant, Amax, sold out its 30 per cent interest in the Tsumeb base metal complex, one of the territory's Big Three, reportedly worried about the threat of UN action. But the buyer was South African. More positively, not one new mine has been opened for eight years.

For the past decade, the Council for Namibia has been girding itself to take legal action against a company, any company contravening the Decree. But how? Noel Sinclair, Guyanese vice-chairman of the council, has no illusions about the task. 'The decree is unique in the history of the UN and of Namibia. It is the first case where the UN terminated the mandate and assumed responsibility, then set up this council to administer the territory until independence — but we cannot even put a foot in the place.'

If the council seized a cargo of karakul at Southampton docks its officials would probably be arrested by the local police. The alternative, to institute proceedings in a Western court, would only be possible if that country recognised the Decree as part of its domestic law.

Noel Sinclair

FIRST, the target. Given that the overriding objective of a court case was to embarrass the company and its government, the subject matter needed to be 'sexy'. Which cannot be said for karakul pelts, openly auctioned in London and, at least, a renewable resource. The waters off the territory's coast have been so over-fished (especially since the mandate was revoked) that most South African pilchard canning factories at Walvis Bay in Namibia have been closed. Even so, a tin of fish seized off the racks of a European supermarket hardly constitutes a dramatic target.

Namibia's diamonds are sold by the De Beers-controlled Central Selling Organisation in London, though by then they have probably been mixed with South African, Russian or Zairean gemstones. Similarly, with Antwerp, the headquarters for the world's diamond cutters. How do you distinguish Namibian carats from any other?

This leaves the most obvious target, the uranium from Rio Tinto-Zinc's vast opencast Rossing diggings in the Namib Desert. At first sight, a British court would seem the obvious arena for the spectacular of the stolen uranium. For unlike the well-established diamond and copper operations, uranium only came on stream in 1976, two years after the natural resources decree came into force and a full ten years after South Africa's mandate for Namibia had been revoked. RTZ operates the mine for several South African partners and is only too pleased to invoke Pretoria's official secrets legislation to avoid providing information.

Rossing's initial profitability was assured through a contract with the state-owned UK Atomic Energy Authority (now British Nuclear Fuels Ltd, or BNFL) for 7,500 tons of uranium oxide for its nuclear power stations. Some famous names played a part in that deal. George

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Brown, as foreign secretary, warned of the dangers, while Tony Benn, as the technology minister, agreed to the contract, later claiming that he had been misled.

That original contract is said to be ending this month, but there remains the strong likelihood that the Ministry of Defence enrichment facility now being built at Capenhurst, near Chester, will process Rossing uranium into fuel to drive Britain's Trident submarines. Unlike the uranium supplied for the power stations, there is no ready alternative, for Canada and Australia, other large producers, prohibit the sale of their uranium for military/nuclear purposes.

In addition, BNFL has contracts with utility companies in Japan, Holland, West Germany and elsewhere to enrich Rossing uranium at Springfield, near Preston. This constitutes half of the plant's activity and is one reason why local Transport and General Workers Union members refuse to cooperate in blockading the illegal uranium. These violations of international law have been made possible by the helpful attitude of successive British governments.

Indeed, Britain's historic role in 'South West Africa' has been more influential than any country except South Africa itself. Lloyd George persuaded the League of Nations (against President Woodrow Wilson's better judgment) to grant the South West mandate to South Africa. When the General Assembly revoked the mandate (South Africa having done nothing for the material and spiritual progress of its people), Harold Wilson's ambassador, together with France and Malawi, abstained. When the Hague International Court of Justice approved that vote in an advisory opinion, Britain's judge dissented.

Later, the Callaghan government explained that the Decree was not binding on Britain, as the General Assembly had acted beyond its power in establishing the Council for Namibia, which administers the Decree. There are no mandatory UN resolutions on trade with South Africa; ergo, we are free to do business with Namibia.

This legalistic interpretation of the law is nicely honed to Britain's commercial interests. As the private secretary to the then foreign secretary, Lord Carrington, said (in 1979): 'The general policy of the British government on trade with South Africa and Namibia. . .is one of non-interference with the normal commercial links. . .In the case of the contracts (with RTZ) the government does not consider that there is any international obligation for it to interfere'. Lord Carrington had left the board of RTZ only months before.

Britain has never stopped official export credit cover facilities for Namibia and it is certain that RTZ has been insured. If the mine is one day nationalised, the British taxpayer might have to provide the compensation. (ECGD's nearest equivalents in the United States, the Export-Import Bank, and the semi-official Hermes in West Germany, have long since stopped official insurance for business in Namibia.)

IT IS thus clear that the British courts are not the sort of place where the Namibian people can expect a hearing. By 1979, plans had been laid to blockade a cargo of 'yellow cake' uranium on one of its regular UTA flights from Windhoek to Marseilles (stopping over facilities courtesy of Zaire and Gabon). A Council for Namibia official would be on the spot to explain the action. But only days before French trade unionists were about to pounce, the news leaked into the press and the route was changed. The French government were spared an embarrassment.

A more conventional court action then became the focus of the Council for Namibia, international lawyers and support groups throughout Europe planning the coup. The uranium is now known to arrive by sea both in Britain and France for enrichment into uranium hexafluoride at Springfield and Marseilles, before some of it is sent to the Urenco plant at Almelo, Holland to be turned into fuel rods. The finished product is then returned to the CEGB and other utility companies in West German and Holland.

Alone in Western Europe, the Dutch have recognised the Decree as part of their domestic law and the Council for Namibia as competent to institute proceedings. By the mid-1970s, the Council had consulted an impressive number of lawyers who, though differing in approach and levels of optimism, indicated that a court action was well worth a try. The procedure could simply be to seek an order forbidding Urenco handling Namibian uranium. A Dutch lawyer, Ms A. N. Gerritsma, has produced a detailed guide on how to go about it. She says there is a 'fair chance' that legal action against a person or company contravening the Decree 'will end in a court order forbidding the defendant to continue this contravention'. She adds, with a touch of impatience, that the outcome is unpredictable, 'but a judge will give a decision only when asked to do so'.

Ms Gerritsma has since herself become a judge and so would not represent the Council. But many of her colleagues, frustrated by the dithering behaviour of the Council, refuse to give more advice unless there is the prospect of action. The liberation movement SWAPO, the London-based Namibia Support Committee, as well as non-governmental organisations in Holland, West Germany, France, Scandinvia, find the delays frustrating. After all, the Council has only one decree to enforce.

Instead, its members tour the world holding seminars, briefings, journalists' encounters, agonising in public as far afield as Geneva, New York, Ljubljana and Bangkok (this last sortie is rumoured to have cost a million dollars). The Cypriot delegate on the Council, Alexandros Vikis, told one such encounter: 'We are also discussing the weakness of the United Nations. We take decisions by overwhelming majorities, sometimes with only one or two dissenting votes, yet we are unable to enforce our decisions. Decree 1 is related to this weakness'.

The 31-member Council for Namibia is largely motivated by its Third World members. Unanimity is a long way off. For one, Belgium needs the diamonds. Those countries which don't trade with Namibia naturally enough accept the restraints imposed by the Decree.

But even the Eastern bloc has its reservations. The Soviet Union and Bulgaria attend all the meetings, insist that the errant multinationals be publicised, but when it comes to action, enthusiasm wanes. They cannot understand how the Council can proceed in a Western court when the government of that country permits trade with Namibia. They also seem wary of allowing a UN organ to interfere in a sovereign state. The memory of the *casques bleus* in the Congo lingers. Rather wait, they say, for independence, then extract compensation from RTZ. But by then, if the precedents elsewhere in Africa are any guide, SWAPO will have been forced to stitch up a deal with their main providers of hard currency.

Last August, the Council's vice-chairman, Noel Sinclair, declared that the 'Urenco option' was about to be taken. It still needs the go-ahead of his Council, and a vote in the General Asembly, so there can be no action before 1986 at the earliest.

All the while, the West continues diligently to undermine both the United Nations and international law. Ironically, the Namibia 'contact group' (Britain, France, West Germany, the United States, Canada) has taken the peace process out of the hands of the United Nations for the last six years. It could be said that their connivance in the plunder of Namibia is a major factor in encouraging South Africa to hang on, hoping for a better deal. That policy has brought handsome profits to Western companies. It has cost many lives, Angolan, South African, Namibian. □

CHINA

MARKET FORCES INTO PLAY

Jonathan Mirsky on the 12th Central Committee's Decision

'IT'S WHAT you in the West call the free enterprise economy,' China's Premier Zhao Zuyang told some western businessmen two weeks ago in Peking. 'We will make use of the law of value and of the market mechanism.'

That was the short version of the 16,000 word 'Decision of the 12th Communist Central Committee', issued last Saturday. It took 100 minutes to read out over the radio, and, if Mao had still been alive, would have earned Zhao and his comrades a Cultural Revolution-style denunciation. But now the Chairman's ex-prisoners are in charge. Last week Zhao, Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang and their mentor Deng Xiaoping presided over the Central Committee's final plenum, where the ready-to-publish Decision received the inevitable 'unanimous' acclamation of the 322 members.

The Dengists had undone further the Maoist economic edifice, which they have been unbolting steadily since 1978. Certain pieties must still be observed. Two weeks ago Premier Zhao told his capitalist audience that 'our framework will be of socialist ownership,' and in its Decision the Central Committee called on the Party, the army, and the masses 'to strive for a new and better situation for socialist modernization.'

The 'situation' is, however, one of which Mrs Thatcher would not be ashamed, even though the Party insists it legitimately harks back to

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Lenin's New Economic Policy.

Big government, the Party concedes, has fostered urban complacency, mental sluggishness, fear of change, and an addiction to convention. What is needed in city enterprises is the same entrepreneurial drive, initiative, and (this is unspoken) greed which have achieved considerable rural prosperity since the 1978 3rd Plenum of the Central Committee. That Plenum discredited the communes (together with most of the rest of Mao's programme) and encouraged peasants to 'get rich' by establishing individual production quotas and retaining the surplus for their own profit.

Rural success lies behind the barely concealed attacked on Maoism in last week's Decision. 'If common prosperity were understood as absolute egalitarianism, and simultaneously prosperity', the document reads, 'not only would this be impossible, but such thinking would lead to common poverty.' This refers to a generally conceded fact in China; for 20 years after the Maoist policies came into full play in the mid-1950s production stagnated, the population soared and, as the World Bank noted in 1981, 100 million Chinese lived in poverty.

Now those successful rural directives, laid down in 1978, are to be applied to the cities in order, Deng Xiaoping said at the beginning of October, to build an 'advanced' China within 50 years. The Decision's key points are intended to invigorate urban enterprises, to make them 'relatively independent entities', subject to supply and demand, decentralized in management and in control of their own hiring, sacking, budgetry and wages — which will rise or fall with marketing success. No more iron rice-bowl.

Except in energy, communications and basic enterprises, like steel, the State will step back and concentrate on managing, inspecting, guiding and regulating to ensure all-round growth. In its new Thatcherite mood, the Party maintains that the centre cannot deal with the complexities and fluidity of thousands of enterprises. In the past, the Decision says, these were hobbled by low-energy bureaucracy.

THE ULTIMATE nitty-gritty is the pricing system — 'the key to the entire reform'. For almost 30 years up to 25 per cent of the State budget has been devoted to subsidising commodity prices such as basic grains and cotton.

Stable since the mid-50s, the low prices were a boon to low-paid city dwellers. But these prices do not reflect varying qualities for the same items, demand, or, sometimes, the cost of raw materials. Prices are now to be allowed to rise, but because 800 million urban residents will be affected, the Party promises that this adjustment will be 'prudent.'

Deng Xiaoping himself admitted recently that all this will be beset with problems. Who will manage China's more than a million factories and mines? For years productivity and marketing success have done little for a manager's career — political reliability and discipline, no matter what the 'line', made for three decades of Vicars of Bray. Will China now find thousands of risk-takers to manage the new profit-seeking enterprises? Will the State, as it guarantees in the Decision, be able to spread a safety net below those who work hard but fail? And what about the gap between rich and poor, already so plain in the countryside? In the rural areas this is justified by a simple ideology: the successful inspire the rest.

Finally, how are devout revolutionaries, already suspicious that the Dengists have moved too fast in establishing a link between mammon and socialism, going to react to the Central Committee's revisionist declaration that 'egalitarian thinking is utterly incompatible with scientific Marxist views on socialism?'

From the middle of the 19th Century, they will remember, reform-minded Chinese leaders sought unsuccessfully to employ western technology to preserve a hazily-conceived Chinese 'essence' from imperialism. Now the enemy is backwardness. The Party, in an attempt to 'integrate the basic tenets of Marxism with China's actual conditions' (and insisting that, at some theoretical bottom-line, land and enterprises belong to all the people) is handing much of the rural and urban economy over to entrepreneurs.

Throughout China, privately organised land use is now guaranteed for at least 15 years, and in some areas for 30. Leasing is everywhere allowed. This is true already for small enterprises as well, and may soon be extended to large ones. The Dengists appear to be trying to use capitalism to ensure Communism — sometime. Deng has not promised a Communist country in 50 years, merely an 'advanced' one.

In the meantime, many old comrades who have led lives of exemplary austerity, despite the temptations of Party perquisites, may wonder if it is true, as the Central Committee stated last week, that such policies 'instead of weakening socialist ownership of the whole people, will contribute to consolidating and improving it.' □

BANGLADESH

MILITARY MANOEUVRES

Joan Smith assesses prospects before December's election

BETWEEN 1975 and 1981, there were 19 military coups or attempted coups in Bangladesh. The twentieth, in 1982, brought to power the man who rules the country today, General Hussain Muhammad Ershad, chief of staff of the army. This month, Bangladesh is in the throes of a struggle which could lead to the restoration of democratic government — or to the imposition of an even more repressive right-wing regime.

The parties opposed to General Ershad have taken a desparate gamble in announcing a boycott of the parliamentary elections due to be held under martial law on 8 December. The three main opposition alliances, in a surprising show of unity, say that they will not contest elections unless martial law is lifted. Ershad's reply is a warning that their refusal will lead to a dramatic increase in the severity of his regime.

In an atmosphere of mounting fear and tension, both sides are waiting to see who will act. Will Ershad back down in the face of huge anti-government rallies, will he carry out his threat, or will one of the opposition alliances break ranks and do a deal? Behind all the public manoeuvrings lies the further fear that the right wing of the military, alarmed by the concessions already made by Ershad, will take matters into its own hands and impose an 'Indonesian-style solution' on Bangladesh.

Uppermost in the minds of the two main opposition leaders, Sheikh Hasina and Begum Zia, are fears that they may be assassinated in the run up to the crisis day of 8 December, when they have called a 24-hour general strike as well as a boycott of the elections. Both women are only too familiar with the handiwork of political assassins. Sheikh Hasina is the daughter of former president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, widely regarded as the founding father of Bangladesh, who was murdered along with most of his family by a group of retired and serving army officers in 1975. Begum Zia is the widow of President Ziaur Rahman, who was killed by a group of military officers in 1981.

Their fears have been exacerbated by the seizure last month, by the Italian authorities, of a ship carrying arms which was bound for the Bangladeshi port of Chittagong. One Bengali newspaper has named the men who chartered the ship as retired army colonels Faruq and Rashid, the ringleaders of the group of officers who murdered Sheikh Mujib.

THIRTEEN YEARS ago, Bangladesh came to symbolise resistance to military dictatorship. The triumph of the Bengali people in driving out their Pakistani rulers caught the imagination of the world. Sadly, the people of Bangladesh have spent a large part of their years of independence under one form or another of military rule.

In 1973, Sheikh Mujib's Awami League won an overwhelming victory in a general election fought under a democratic constitution established the year before. Two years later, in the midst of a deepening economic crisis, the constitution was amended to appoint Sheikh Mujib president for five years and to allow him to form a one party state. In August that year, Mujib was murdered. Martial law was proclaimed and, in November, Mujib's four principal associates were killed while being held without trial in Dhaka central jail.

In that month, General Zia took over as chief martial law administrator. The following year, he declared himself president. In 1978, Zia won a presidential election and in February 1979 his Bangladesh National Party won a majority of seats in National Assembly elections. Just over two years later, Zia was assassinated in Chittagong by a group of serving army officers.

The vice-president, Abdus Sattar, won the presidential election held in November that year, but faced mounting criticism from the army chief of staff, General Ershad. In March 1982, Ershad led a successful military coup, dissolved parliament, and proclaimed martial law.

This autumn's events are the culmination of attempts by the opposition to force Ershad into keeping his promise that democracy would be restored to Bangladesh. The chief opposition parties — Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, Begum Zia's Bangladesh National Party, and

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Camera Press

General Ershad: threatening a severer regime

the Islamic Fundamentalist Jamat-e-Islami Party — have already forced a number of important concessions from Ershad.

He has withdrawn a proposal to hold local elections under martial law, which the opposition saw as a means of giving a civilian facade to the military regime. He has also shelved his plan to hold a presidential election before parliamentary elections, a tactic which would have placed the three opposition leaders in conflict with each other.

But Ershad is sticking to his intention of holding parliamentary elections on 8 December under an only slightly relaxed form of martial law. He has turned down demands for an interim government set up to oversee free elections. Opposition fears subsided a little last month when the government appeared, in the wake of the seizure of the arms ship, to make a real attempt to find Mujib's assassins, Faruq and Rashid, who pose a clear threat to Sheikh Hasina.

But then violence flared on 27 September during a day-long general strike called by the opposition parties. Four people were killed, including a former Awami League MP, Muhammad Moizuddin. The country's Supreme Court Bar Association has named the killer as Azam Khan, a convicted murderer recently released from jail in spite of a 14-year sentence for the assassinations of a trade union leader and a journalist. Earlier this year, Azam Khan appeared at a public meeting with General Ershad, who introduced the killer to the crowd as his younger brother.

A rally held in Dhaka by Ershad's Janadal Party on 11 October attracted 120,000 people and was hailed by state television as the largest ever in Bangladesh. Simulaneous rallies held by the three opposition parties on 14 October, which drew half a million supporters, went unreported on television. Newspapers failed to appear the next day in protest at government instructions not to report the meetings.

Now both sides are bracing themselves for the real test of strength, whose outcome will be as important for the freedom of the Bangladeshi people as the liberation struggle of 1971. As well as another national strike on election day, the opposition is calling for a fortnight of resistance starting on 27 October. It is also urging people to stop paying taxes the day after the election. □

SOVIET BLOC

GRAFTERS DENOUNCED

Gary Mead analyses the official publicity being given to corruption

THE OFFICIAL Soviet daily, *Pravda*, published this month 63 official slogans to be used during the celebrations marking the 67th anniversary of the 'Great October Revolution', on 7 November. Slogan No. 18 exhorts: 'Working people of the Soviet Union! Struggle persistently to fulfil socialist pledges for above-plan growth of labour productivity and for lowering production costs!'

But, if recent reports in the official, state-controlled media of the Soviet bloc are correct, then it's clear that large numbers of socialist workers are today rather more interested in lining their own pockets. The Soviet bloc media have recently given remarkable coverage to the type of crime that once was a closely-kept secret — officials abusing their positions for personal gain.

In June the Hungarian authorities established a new police task force, designed specifically to crack down on pilfering from the State. Last week the Hungarian government announced that it will be introducing new laws to prevent such things as shops deceiving customers as to real prices and to stop shops withholding goods to create artificial shortages and price rises.

The heart of the problem appears to be the Soviet Union itself. In June *Pravda* reported the dismissal of 15 senior party officials from the Central Asian republic of Uzbekistan, including members of the police and judiciary. The scandal centred on their involvement in the region's major industry, cotton. They were found guilty of having forged figures, bribery, and theft of State property.

In early October, *Pravda* published another exposé of corruption in high places, this time in the Irkutsk province. It involved the Ministry of Power and Electrification. Two Deputy Ministers were sacked and expelled from the party for 'abuses of their official position for mercenary ends'. The head of an Irkutsk construction company was dismissed, along with a First Secretary in the province.

The 'Uzbek mafia' and the Irkutsk grafters are not isolated cases. In the USSR the head of the State circus has been jailed for taking hard-currency bribes and a manager of one of Moscow's more luxurious department stores has been executed; while in Hungary the year has been full of corruption scandals in the State's football teams, with players banned and fined for deliberately losing games.

Elsewhere in the Soviet bloc the same things have been going on. According to PAP (the official Polish news agency) State inspectors in August this year discovered 'malpractices' in 50 per cent of retail outlets across the country. Over 850 people were taken to court, more than one third of the offenders being shop managers. Two weeks ago Polish TV carried a report on corruption on building sites, revealing that up to September this year 300 site managers had been 'punished' for 'corrupt practices'.

In September alone, the Polish Milicja were reported to have confiscated goods valued at 25 million zlotys, which had been pilfered by shop-workers and managers who, rather than put them on the shelves in State shops, concealed them for private re-sale at much greater personal profit. Budapest radio reported in late September that theft and embezzlement of public property cost the State 626 million forints in 1983. The Czech Ministry of the Interior reported in April this year that more than 31,000 cases of 'economic crime' were uncovered last year and noted that, unlike previous years, organised groups were on the increase. Trade union and housing officials have resigned in Yugoslavia, farm managers in Hungary, shop managers in Poland, Ministers in the USSR — the list goes on and on.

It's important to realise that the majority of these crimes are carried out by State-appointed officials. There are frequent mentions in the official media of all these countries of private speculators and black marketeers 'ruining the economy', but such crime always has been common enough in the Soviet bloc. In these cases however the criminals are officials using their appointments — in many cases *nomenklatura* posts, that is directly appointed by communist party leaderships — to feather their own already rather privileged nests by stealing from the State.

Official figures for crime are always difficult to come by in these countries. Perhaps the comrades are just less morally upright than in the past, perhaps the scale of these crimes has always been so high. One possibility is that the State-run media are giving greater attention to such crime in order to forestall popular disgruntlement, Solidarity-style. In the past official publicity for such crime has been relatively scarce. By now openly speaking about it, the authorities run the risk of revealing to the world the extent of official corruption, in order at least to demonstrate to non-party people that it will not escape unpunished.

But the rash of salacious scandals involving high-level State functionaries, splashed cross the official newspapers, is clearly embarrassing for the communist leaderships. They can explain the black marketeers and speculators as disaffected anti-socialist hooligans, parasites on the State. The theft of State property by State appointees is a different matter.

It contradicts many notions right at the heart of communist ideology, as represented in the Soviet bloc. The State mafias are run by people brought up within socialist ethics, who have imbibed since birth teachings on the duties of a socialist on patriotism, pride in the State, honour to the party, and support for the working masses (who, by and large, never get the chance to steal a State brick or car).

If the problem were less extensive, then it might be possible to brush it aside as aberration, or as a few bad apples in an otherwise sound barrel. What we are told by the official press in the USSR and East Europe is always much less than the total truth. But, in an important sense, the real worry for the authorities is not so much the theft of State property, as the evidence it gives of the ideological failure of these regimes to turn ordinary, corruptible human beings into the socialist heroes of socialist realist fiction. □

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LETTERS

The West and Khmer Rouge

David Munro, Documentary film-maker

I had hoped that John Pilger's review of William Shawcross's book *The Quality of Mercy* (*NS* 12 October) would be taken in the light in which it was written, a sincere evaluation. However, John Saunders (Letters, 19 October) writes: 'We have not yet finished with Cambodia nor heard the last of disasters. What we can do without is confused political comment'. John Pilger's review was not confused. It was political and rightly so. It is impossible to remove politics from the Cambodian disaster as Mr Shawcross's book, itself quite clearly political, shows.

I suppose I should, at this stage, declare my interest. I made the television documentary *Year Zero* with John Pilger in 1979, but my interest is not motivated by solidarity with Pilger, rather by increasing anger with those who would re-write the recent history of Indochina to ease the West's guilt. This is being done either directly by people like Alexander Haig, who, in his book *Caveat*, states that the Khmer Rouge were 'a regime composed of Marxist zealots, a force created by the Vietnamese Communists'.

If anything the Khmer Rouge were Maoist fanatics and they were not created by the Vietnamese, Communist or otherwise. Indirectly, Mr Shawcross, by constant innuendo in his book, also attempts to alter history: 'Cambodia had been liberated by the same Vietnamese Communists that had always been suspected of wishing to topple dominoes'. The Domino Theory had been that it was the Chinese who would topple the dominoes; interestingly the Chinese were and remain the Khmer Rouge's principal allies.

What none of us should forget is that five years after the Vietnamese ousted the Khmer Rouge the murderous reign is being excused, washed-over and at times totally ignored. The fact remains that the Khmer Rouge were responsible for the deaths of at least two million of their own people between 1975 and 1978. The legacy of that ordeal, not to mention a real fear within ordinary Cambodians that the Khmer Rouge might someday return, exists to this day: I know, I was there again three months ago.

Those of us who were in Cambodia in 1979 saw the results of the Khmer Rouge carnage. Let us not allow books like *The Quality of Mercy* or letters such as that from Mr Saunders divert our attention from the real issue. Western civilised nations still recognise the Khmer Rouge and support them in the United Nations. The fact demands constant political comment.

Jonathan Mirsky, London W11

John Pilger should declare an interest before he reviews a book. In his piece on Shawcross's *The Quality of Mercy* he neglects to tell us that Shawcross refers to him, not wholly favourably. Nor does he tell us about one of Shawcross's main points — that there was probably no mass famine in Kampuchea in 1979-1980, when Pilger in all honesty thought there was, and that the major aid adminstrators knew it.

Instead Pilger strikes out in all directions, settling old and clearly still-festering scores. Shawcross made a mistake in a 1980 article, Pilger tells us. Indeed — and Shawcross corrects it in the book. Shawcross 'justifies' the American war. Untrue — Shawcross charges the Americans with having destroyed Cambodian society (p.50). Shawcross ducks China's anti-Vietnamese motivations. Wrong again — these are spelled out on pp.59-60.

Pilger knows a lot about Kampuchea and has done as much as anyone to let us know what happened there. But one of Shawcross's major points is that like many experts (including Shawcross) Pilger may have been wrong about the mass starvation. Oxfam's representative on the scene in December 1979 found no evidence at all, although he reported food shortages. Fortunately, the Khmers had been able to feed themselves. If Pilger disagrees with this, he should say so, and show why. Flailing about is no substitute for analysis, much less reading the book at hand.

Mrs T and gay rights

Peter Campbell, Conservative Group for Homosexual Equality, London WC1

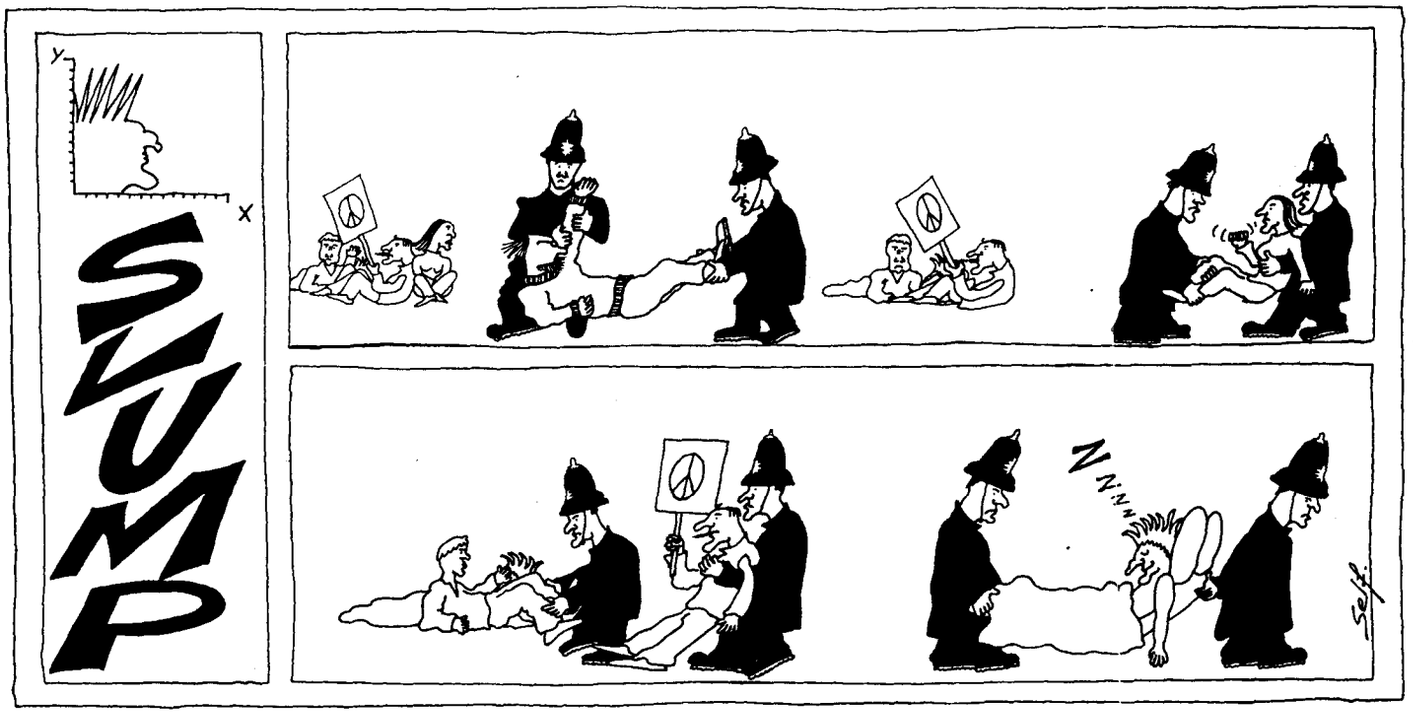
It is sad that your statement about the deplorable actions of Customs and Excise against Gay's the Word bookshop (*NS* 12 October) should contain the doubly misleading remark that '17 years ago Mrs Thatcher avoided the divisions [the votes] on the Labour government's partial decriminalisation of gay men in the 1967 Sexual Offences Act.'

The 1967 Act was not a government measure. It was sponsored by an inter-party group of private members and although the Home Secretary and the Leader of the House gave it vital help the government did not commit itself and was criticised for its pusillanimity. Mrs Thatcher voted favourably in four of the 16 divisions. As she had the shadow Treasury duties you mentioned and as only a few of the divisions had more than 140 participants her absences are understandable. She was among the early supporters of reform, for on 29 June 1960 she voted in support of a motion calling on the government to take early action upon the recommendations contained in Part Two of the Wolfenden Report. She does not deserve your snide comment.

Ed note: We are glad to correct the voting record — but believe that it only strengthens the case we were making about the extraordinary present malevolence of Mrs Thatcher's administration towards lesbians and gay men through the use of Customs and Excise.

CND does have a sense of humour. . .

Peace may at last be restored between Bruce Kent of CND and Islander (see *NS* 12 October). Christmas crackers are 'off' this year, but readers may like to know that badges like the one pictured above (actual size) can be bought in person or by post, price 20p each, from the **CND Shop, 227 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.** Send SAE for list of 'jokes' available.



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The judge's appointment

Lord Hailsham, House of Lords, London SW1

Forgive me intruding into the fictional world of your correspondent Hal Austin (*NS* 12 October). But reality must sometimes do so.

The President of the Industrial Tribunals is a judicial appointment. I am responsible for it. I was therefore responsible for the appointment of Judge West Russell. I appointed him for what you may think a very peculiar reason. I was advised by my office that he was the best man available. Neither politics nor policies entered into my choice. This judicial office is an exacting one, with administrative as well as purely judicial responsibilities. There is no convention dictating preference to internal candidates. Regional and full-time chairmen, who are frequently also recorders in the Crown Court, are available for appointment to the Circuit bench, and vice versa. These are the facts. There are no others.

Violent videos

Al Garthwaite, Leeds

When I first read David Edgar's review (*NS* 5 October) of the all-male book on video nasties it seemed so obviously absurd as not to be worth the bother of a reply. However, since you've also drawn attention to it on your cover, I will make a few of many possible points.

● Many surveys have found links between violent films, videos, porn magazines and actual male behaviour, expectations, levels of aggression and attitudes towards women and girls. Many of us know from experience the effects of violent films. Watching women raped and degraded makes a lot of men feel powerful while women feel terrible and humiliated. Even if women may experience it as a turn-on, it's a degrading, masochistic turn-on. And it shows how girls grow up alienated from ourselves and our potential sexuality.

● The sort of feminism — shared by Polly Toynbee — which wants to see these sort of videos banned is NOT the same as Mary Whitehouse's moral line. If Edgar bothered to read any recent feminist work on this subject (eg articles in *Sweeping Statements*, Women's Press or *The Sexuality Papers*, RKP) he'd see how far removed what we are saying is from the Tory return-to-traditional values line.

● I cannot believe the nonsense of comparing *I Spit On Your Grave* to *Hamlet*. No woman watches a 'long and lovingly filmed' gang rape without being badly affected. It is simply male mythologising to suggest — as that particular video does — that a woman who has just undergone the appalling ordeal of gang rape could easily plan and execute — all on her own — 'a bloody revenge' on each of the gang. Many raped women are terrified to go out for months or years afterwards; many turn to tranquilisers; some to suicide; many need hours of talking it through in a safe environment like a Rape Crisis Centre to even begin to function again.

At the very most, women may get together with women friends and confront the rapist. But this sort of feminist collective action, because it is more plausible, is more frightening to men and therefore unlikely to be portrayed in a video nasty. The image of the lone, pseudomale, avenging female, being a creature of male fantasy, is so unrealistic it is not threatening to men — and may even be titillating. In contrast, films like *A Question of Silence* or *9 to 5* show women acting collectively to get the better of men, which is much more possible and hence more frightening and less titillating.

● Feminists are not in fact suggesting censorship of D.H. Lawrence et al and we didn't like the recent legislation which is used against us and our publications; look at the recent raids on *Gay's the Word* bookshop, while porn proliferates. The ACTT (film union) suggested a number of improvements to the British Bill to deal exclusively with nasties that degrade women. This is not censorship to my mind any more than the Race Relations Act.

● Which brings me to the extreme racism of many nasties and porn in general. Does Edgar suggest that it is good for us all to be exposed to extremes of racism — is it enriching and ennobling? Or does he reserve that for sexual violence?

FEEDBACK

A touch of anarchy

THERE ARE two fundamental benchmarks of socialist economies which socialists of all hues must see clearly, and which were only touched on tangentially in the articles by John Grahl (*NS* 5 October) and Alec Nove (*NS* 12 October). They are crucial, irrespective of the degree of political power which has been achieved by socialist movements: they do not disappear even after 'final victory' and they influence, decisively, what socialists can 'feasibly' offer. They could prove to be a dangerous pitfall if they are not properly understood.

First, it is a basic tenet of the socialist world view that the great evil of capitalism is its anarchy associated with competition and the vicissitudes of the market. It is this which brings unemployment and tears people's lives apart. Capitalism is not a conspiracy organised by a ruling class, it is a system of organising economic activity along particular lines.

And yet, it is not possible to eliminate this anarchy altogether simply by exercising political power in a particular way, nor is it possible to attempt to do so without important and possibly undesirable side-effects. All economic systems, in whatever way they are organised, encounter an important source of anarchy emanating from the difficulty and uncertainty surrounding the attempt to match demand and supply at some point in the future. Production and investment decisions have to be taken now, with inevitably incomplete knowledge of the level and kind of demand which will materialise later.

Contemporary capitalism attempts to counter this problem in multifarious ways and mainly at a micro level (eg sophisticated futures markets) and the attempts by large corporations to use the ever increasing potential of information technology, both to draw consumers more firmly in line with their future plans and to respond more immediately to their whims. It is continually frustrated by the fact that the system is not co-ordinated at a macro level and it therefore tends to overproduce and offers too great a variety of competing choices to the consumer.

Equally though, a planned economy cannot eliminate this problem. Its chances of success are greater than those of capitalism because speculation and autonomous demand factors are eliminated. But it can never organise the future with absolute certainty if only because producers will tend to create permanent shortages by hoarding raw materials and labour in order to fulfil plans and consumers will always retain the possibility of not buying at all, even if their choice of products has been restricted.

These points provide the first fundamental benchmark of socialist economics. *Insofar as the inherent difficulties associated with meeting demands occurring at some point in the future are an important source of anarchy, planning cannot eliminate it.* The planning slogan is not the cure-all that many socialists think it is. What socialism can offer, however, is more organised alternatives for people affected by this inevitable kind of anarchy.

Second, the typical response of socialists to the problems encountered by people embraced by a system of central planning is to advocate decentralisation in various guises, as Grahl clearly recognised. However, this does not generally go hand in hand with a recognition of the real dilemma involved. If capitalism offers a kind of democracy to consumers and Soviet-style socialism offers a kind of democracy to producers, then, moving into a different gear, socialists often counter with a plea for 'real' democracy for producers, although this is not necessarily seen as being incompatible with real democracy for consumers: after all, a hierarchy of delegated and mandated workers' representatives will be able to identify collective social needs.

While the latter may be possible and appropriate in societies where very basic needs are not being met, it is not possible in a complex industrial society. As Nove himself has repeatedly and tartly reminded us in *The Economics of Feasible Socialism*, the Supreme Soviet cannot control the detail of pricing and production decisions relating to two or three million different goods and services, nor is it appropriate for workers at individual points of production to have the final say. A non-capitalist market (ie one not associated with concentrations of private property) has to be employed to help out, and this also implies the resurrection of individual choice.

This leads us to the second fundamental benchmark of socialist economics which, rather curiously, was referred to by Peter Walker in his address to the Tory Reform Group at the Conservative Party Conference. *Given that a market of some description, along with individual choice, has to enter into socialist calculations, democracy for consumers and democracy for producers enter into conflict: there is a strict trade-off between them and a balance has to be struck.*

Furthermore, it is also important to recognise that democracy for producers is not *a priori* more important than democracy for consumers (or vice versa). After all, producers are also consumers and one of the causes of popular discontent in the socialist block is the difficulty in obtaining good quality denim jeans, polaroid sunglasses and paint in delicate pastel shades. Moreover, the consumption goods available on the capitalist market do allow people, including those of modest means, to use their leisure time in a large variety of creative ways by obtaining anything from good quality fishing tackle to popular music and a range of DIY materials. There would seem to be no reason why a non-capitalist market, along with a much more equal distribution of income, should not build on this.

Opting for a particular degree of consumer democracy and individual choice also implies a decrease in the capacity of the system to control the future and thus an attendant increase in anarchy and a correspondingly larger number of casualties. Unfortunately these dilemmas cannot be washed away. There is no such thing as a perfect economic system.

Phil Wright

Phil Wright lectures in economics at the University of Sheffield.

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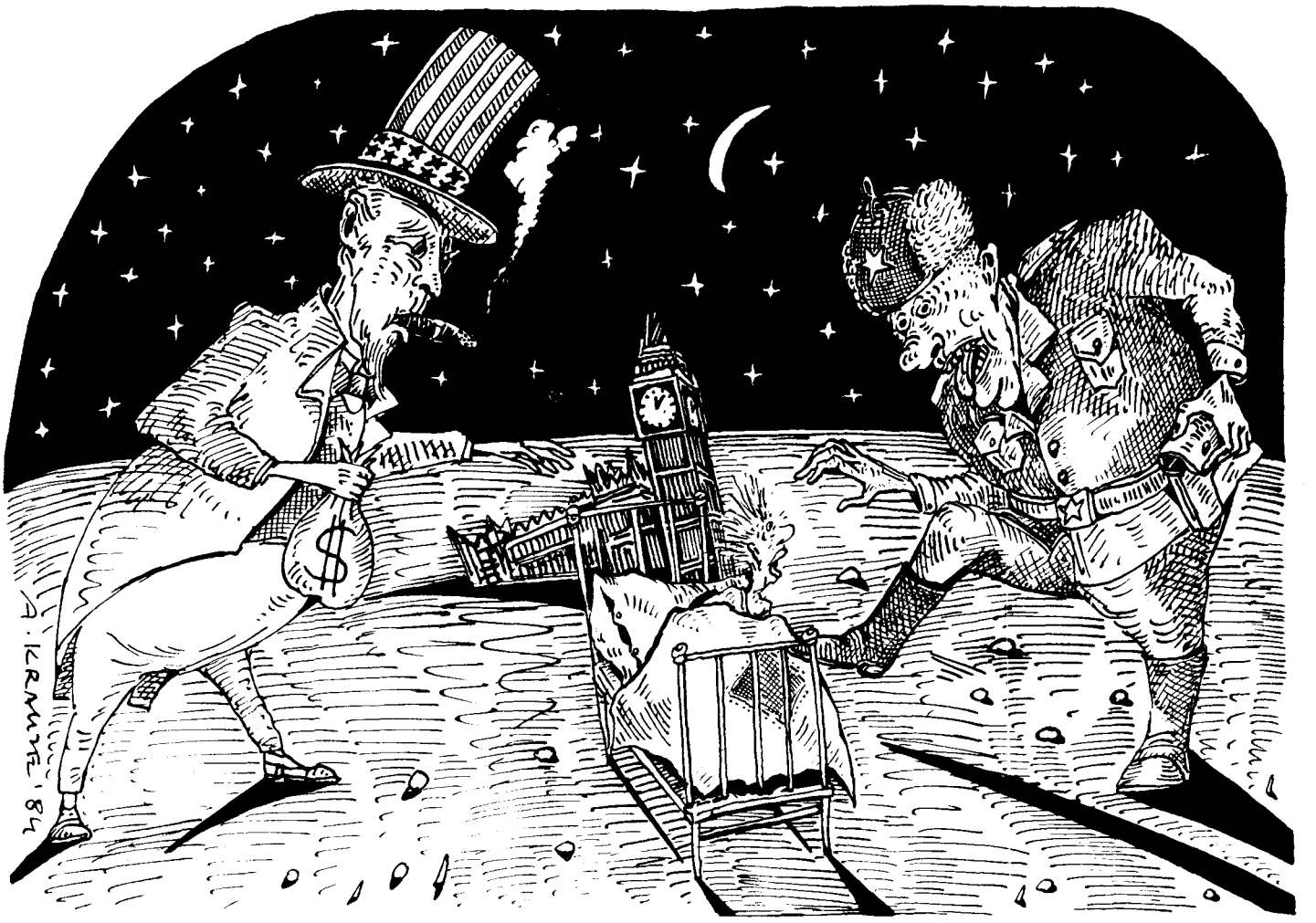

Growing up on Stalin's boot

For almost 40 years, the once-shared history of Europe has been divided by the 'Iron Curtain', cutting off the people on either side from the culture and experience on the other. In 1980 Zdena Tomin, a writer and spokesperson for Charter 77, was forced into exile from her native Czechoslovakia and came to live in England. Her experience was portrayed in Enemies of the State, *broadcast by Granada TV last year. She is a Fellow of the Transnational Institute and is working on a novel about her experience of both Europes. Here she describes the dreams and nightmares they evoke*

MUCH HAS BEEN written about the significance of dreams, even though, in the everyday succession of dreary mornings, most people don't bother to ponder them. For an exile, however, dreams are an almost constitutive part of his or her experience, and there are quite a few that are generally shared among fellow exiles from different countries (by 'exile' I mean a person who has been forced to leave or prevented from returning to his or her country of origin for political reasons). At an early stage of my own exile-hood, some three years ago, my dreams were almost identical to those a Chilean friend used to have, but she assured me that the worst ones would ease off with time. She was right: I no longer suffer those unbearable guilt-ridden nightmares of the first months. I don't even want to describe them any longer; suffice it to say that they had to do with all the despairs of a traitor, a deserter who had left his friends behind in combat.

Now and then I still get a dream that is painful and makes me toss about the bed in sobs of an almost Russian intensity. It is a well known exile-dream: there is a fence, wall, barrier, frontier; behind the frontier, there is Home; one's heart leaps over the barrier, one's body cannot. The thing with me is that Home is no longer defined in terms of one country, sometimes it's

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Czechoslovakia, sometimes it's England; on whatever side of that fence the dream puts me, I pine for the other, mortified by the thought that I could never see it again.

But most of my dreams have become strangely lovely, and thoroughly mixed, as grain harvested from different fields gets mixed in a mill. When I sleep, I can walk across Trafalgar Square with Michael Heseltine who makes sense speaking in an impeccable if grumpy Czech, make a sharp turn left and walk up a winding medieval street to the Prague Castle, take a sledge-ride down the hill with a bunch of ancient schoolmates dressed in Wimpy's uniforms, cross the river and find myself, with only a mild surprise, in Rome chased by an odd KGB agent who turns out to be my old music teacher, and end up among the dunes on Harlech beach with my mother calling me home for dinner in a true Hackney English and looking hurt if I remind her that she never, until her peaceful death, spoke anything but an ordinary middle-Bohemian Czech. All this in one dream, painted in warm colours and deep lights, such as, in real life, can be found only before or after a summer thunderstorm. It is a wonderful world and I hate waking up.

In my waking hours, I am a bit of a freak, like those people who can whistle and sing simultaneously. My thoughts often conduct themselves in English and in Czech at the same time; it may well be an advanced mental process, but it wears me out, especially as it is not only a linguistic problem but also a competition between two different ways of thinking.

Yet, on the whole, I suppose I am lucky. It is generally thought that a politically involved person, forced into exile, irretrievably loses the very backbone of her involvement in life and sooner or later becomes a walking anachronism, sadly out of touch with the Cause yet clinging to it, unable to let go, find another. I was terrified that it would happen to me. To some degree it did, certainly on the outside: it is now almost five years since I was, in Prague, one of the three spokespersons for the Charter 77 human rights movement, yet whenever I give a talk I am introduced to the audience as the 'spokesperson of Charter 77'. Having explained that I am one no longer, that V. Benda, J. Ruml and J. Sternova are the current Charter 77 spokespersons in Prague and that I have actually come from London, I can feel that it is a bit of a let-down for the audience, and wish I had some status to my name. (I then have to be unashamedly personal in my talk, and am always humbled by the readiness of English people to share one's intimate experience and one's personal political passions.)

That I am not suffering from any Loss of Cause lies, I think, entirely with the cause itself, the ambition for freedom, for justice, for democracy. My realisation that my cause was not peculiar to Czechoslovakia was not a sudden revelation. Rather, in a process of slow amazement, I was reassured to find out that I (like millions of Czechs, Poles or Hungarians) do not have and never have had, any other cause than the general ideals shared by quite a few million of born-and-bred British (French, Swedish etc) citizens — even though, personally, I grew up on Stalin's left shoe.

THE MONSTROUSLY huge monument of the Generalissimo stood on the Letna hill overlooking the river and its bridges, the spires of the Old Town and, on winter days when the trees have shed

'Maybe I dream so much because I am an exile, because I have lived under different sets of ideologies, met two sets of people with the same needs and wishes, and two versions of militant conservative establishments producing opposite enemy-images . . .'

their leaves, the silhouette of Prague Castle. Between the ages of 14 and 17, I often played truant from school, comfortably seated on the well-moulded, sun-warmed granite of Stalin's left shoe, reading (and scribbling) poetry. All that time the monument was due for demolition, as the days of Stalinism were over. But it was more difficult to dismantle than it was to build, demolition projects failing to ensure that the entire hill's structure would not collapse into the river. I did not have to hurry my reading, and I was never disturbed; nobody came to pay a tribute. In the magnificent rooms inside and under the monument only potatoes were stored and left to decay in their wet sacks. It was a magical place, perfect for a gradual recovery from the shock the disclosure of the Stalinist terror gave me (born below the poverty line and with a Communist father, I was an ardent Red Pioneer until then). There, I would dream about the world beyond the horizon, reading Apollinaire or Whitman or Lermontov or sonnets by one William Shakespeare; anything I could lay my hands on.

By the time that Stalin's shoe was finally sledge-hammered or whatever was done to it, the era of the Sixties was budding, and soon I had no problems or doubts whatsoever. I did not join the Party — that I rejected for ever — but I could see no reason why socialism couldn't be shaped into a democratic society, if we all felt strongly about it, if we all fought the Conservative Communist and, above all, the Censor. (My heart aches when I remember 1964, 5, 6, 7, 8. . .I can't say it better than Milan Kundera: 'This happy marriage of culture and life, of creative achievement and the people, has marked the revolts of Central Europe with a beauty so inimitable that it will always cast a spell over those who lived through those times.'*) Only I would not call the Prague Spring a mere revolt; I still think that we were pretty damn near to creating a society with a human face, outside communism and capitalism. But I had better stop right here, or I would launch into a long tirade of 'if onlies' and 'why on Earths?'

My first journey to the 'West' was with a small group of students and scholars. Then, as early as 1964 and for the first time since the war, we were starting an exchange with the University of Heidelberg in West Germany. I couldn't have been more excited, I felt as though I was on a mission, even if my German was still very poor.

A cab driver in Heidelberg asked me, inevitably, where was I from, and when I duly answered I was from Prague, Czechoslovakia, he almost killed us both, trying to embrace me while driving. 'Oh I am so glad for you, Fräulein,' he exclaimed, 'you are saved!' Watching my uncomprehending face, he asked — 'You are not going back there, are you?!' I laughed but couldn't make him see what was funny, and he parted from me very grudgingly. But he would have had his revenge if he could have seen me only a couple of hours later making a public spectacle of myself.

I was 23 at that time, and I had never eaten a single whole banana. A few could then be bought on the market in Prague, but I had a one-year-old son and what I could buy, he got; I just bit off the heads and tails. So, in Heidelberg, I bought a whole bunch, a dozen or so beautiful, ripe bananas, carried them to the nearest bench on the University Square and, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, ate all of them but one. Waking up from the trance, I found myself surrounded by a crowd of West Germans who watched with fascination this obviously well-fed, well-dressed young woman, stuffing herself with a nauseating quantity of bananas. I could have died of shame; yet even the last fruit eaten in the comparative privacy of a youth hostel tasted of sweet luxury.

*'Kidnapped West or Culture Bows Out'; Granta No 11.

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For quite some time, I thought that the 'West' had little to offer apart from an occasional banana or a pair of jeans, an occasional good book, film, play or art exhibition, and an occasional free and futile discussion on politics or philosophy. (Lord, how I wish I could have back all those hours spent in arguments about variations of Marxism! I'd use them to plant trees or to visit my old aunts in the village before they all die out, ever so quietly, taking a wealth of knowledge with them.) I wasn't really looking, for I was very arrogant; I reckoned that everybody in the 'West' had just about what they wanted and were playing revolutions out of sheer boredom, while we in Prague were the unobtrusive builders of a new democratic world. I mistook both the Soviet Union and the United States for mildly stupid giants losing their last imperialist teeth and becoming basically benign. . .That era of confidence and blissful ignorance couldn't have lasted more than three or four years of my life, but in retrospect it seems like ages.

Since the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 (which paved the way to Soviet-American détente!), I've been through some punitive if efficient 'schooling', both as an anonymous inhabitant of an occupied and crippled country and as a 'dissident' with a name and address best known to the police. But I wonder whether I could have completed my 'political education', or closed a full circle of my particular life, if — more by a random work of fate than by some elaborate KGB plan — I hadn't been 'chosen' for exile instead of imprisonment. If I had not come to live in Britain, if I had not seen (with disbelieving eyes at first) the class system at work, if I had not had to try to accommodate myself to it, I doubt if I could have resurrected the wounded socialist buried alive deep in my mind. And I could have cherished freedom only as a Utopian dream, as an abstract or purely personal value, for the rest of my life, had I not seen it (with all its limitations) at work in Britain, France, the United States; had I not lived it.

IT IS uncanny what similar mistakes we make on both sides of the Divide, what similar rhetorics we use, always ready to reject Socialism for Freedom, or Freedom for Socialism. (I can get an easy round of applause if I mock the — in many aspects perfectly mockable — British Freedom; and I confess with shame that I have not always resisted the temptation, while my best friends were sitting in police dungeons in Prague or Brno for breathing a word of plain truth.) Fortunately, we don't really mean it. The numbers of people actually pining for the restoration of capitalism in Central and Eastern Europe, and the numbers of people willing to do without fundamental liberties, democratic institutions, the ballot and election rights in Western Europe, are minimal; such people form negligible minorities. While the State ideologies of East and West have become skin-deep and purely instrumental, the real sets of social and political values vital to most people are clearly converging.

'It is generally thought that a politically involved person, forced into exile, irretrievably loses the very backbone of her involvement in life and sooner or later becomes a walking anachronism, sadly out of touch with the Cause yet clinging to it, unable to let go, find another . . .'

My old suspicion, that the Iron Curtain is but a pile of decaying ideological rubbish, which has to be held upright by the extensive military hardware of the two 'blocs' and by the mutual blackmail of the nuclear threat, has grown considerably since I came to live in Britain. On good days, this gives sustenance to my strangely incurable optimism; on bad days, to angry despair. Maybe we are too far gone, maybe we fear the bomb too much to think about sensible alternatives. (That various combinations of socialism, democracy and 'traditional' freedom are not a case of having your cake and eating it, is evident in Scandinavia perhaps precisely because they managed, by a mixture of geographical luck, a strong concept of social justice and good political sense, to remain largely outside the US-USSR divide.)

That is my pessimism that too much — and in Central and Eastern Europe it includes our independence — has been stolen from us. But back to optimism: recently, during a speaking tour through the Midlands organised by END, I had an opportunity to discuss the 'Beyond the Blocs' question with local CND groups. Unlike three or four years ago, there is now a growing awareness of the connections between the division of Europe, the arms race and the campaigns for nuclear disarmament (also between Charter 77 and CND, CND and Solidarnosc, the miners' strike and peace, peace and police states; of such 'small' connections there are many more). No longer does it seem inevitable that sincere attempts to get rid of the Iron Curtain will start the missiles on their murderous flight (it could be a lesser or altogether different reason). On the other hand, a Europe that came to its senses (it's going to be 40 years since the end of World War II next year!) could not be used either as a 'theatre' of war or as a pawn in a war over the right to exploit the Third World.

ALL RIGHT, I AM a dreamer. I dream a lot about Britain too, since I have come to love it (especially as England, Wales and Scotland), since English is the language I write in. I do dream of a day when it would no longer be possible for a Conservative leader to rebuff the Labour Party by accusing it of wanting to establish 'the same shabby, look-alike, totalitarian states they have in Eastern Europe'. Not because the Labour Party does not deserve any criticism, but because the argument is blatantly incorrect and hypocritical. East Europeans do not 'have' totalitarian states; that Central and Eastern Europe suffers under totalitarianism is primarily a result of post-war agreements between the strongest victors, and of the Cold War politics that followed. And though there is a terrible drabness in Romania, though much of Poland is shabby and poor, though freedom and gaiety are gone from Czechoslovakia and Hungarians could do enormously better, some of the most shabby, drab, uniform and poor districts can still be found in England; street after street of the same dilapidated houses, dusty shops, bad food, insufficient health care, hopelessness and misery.

In other words, my dream is about pooling our resources and ideas together, instead of bashing each other on the head with sticks that aren't even ours (though manufacturing our own sticks is clearly not the answer). Maybe I dream so much because I am an exile, because I have by now lived under different sets of ideologies, met two sets of people with the same needs and wishes, and two versions of militant conservative establishments producing opposite enemy-images yet actually supporting each other very well. I can dream out the blackest of comedies: months after a global or 'limited' nuclear war, when it is safe to move about again, dozens of high-ranking government members and their scouts will climb out of their bunkers, travel to the least damaged landscape (somewhere in Switzerland, I shouldn't wonder) and shake hands over a glass of vintage, pre-nuclear, champagne — and over millions of our rotting bodies. And it isn't my favourite nightmare. The only good thing about it is that it stops me being ashamed of dreaming aloud and even suggesting that my dreams are made of some real stuff. That the human, social, historical, and in a true sense political, conditions for the crumble and fall of the Iron Curtain are here; that it is a workable dream. □

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Homme fatale

Andrew Lumsden

Lord Alfred Douglas
H. MONTGOMERY HYDE *Methuen* £14.95

WHAT A LOT of wives, fiancées, sons the
seem to have had compared with our gay n
culture of today, is the main impression I f

of the male homosexuals described in
absorbing book. Or, to reverse the proposit
what a lot of gay men women seem to have
for husbands, and children had for fathers
'the old days'.

Not *such* old days. Oscar Wilde's daughte
law is still, I understand and am happy to
with us, as is his grandson, though Raym
the only child of Alfred Douglas's
marriage to Olive Custance, died without i
in 1964. Mind you, it's obviously onl
relatively narrow and privileged stratun
male gays today in the metropolitan West
are exempt, if we wish to be, from soc
coercive marriage and parentho
Montgomery Hyde is describing a norm wi
neither I nor any of my friends is living,
which our 1980s cultural output i
reflecting. Disturbing thought. . .

Anyway, here we have a three times mar
heterosexual in his seventies, in the shap
Montgomery Hyde, who has set out to giv
affectionate portrait of 'Bosie' (Alfred Doug
whom he met in 1931, by which time Bosie
61 and had 14 years yet to live.

Counting on my fingertips, and I've prob
forgotten something, I make it the sixt
Hyde's books since his *The Trials of O
Wilde* in 1948 to be directly concerned
Wilde, and the 11th of his books to be of
concern to modern gay studies. He tells me
probably be his last extended piece of Wilde
though not, perish the thought, his last boo
was chance that led to his getting to k
Douglas in the 1930s and really it

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Dr Head found a company doctor's report of 1942. A Sena Estates' flour mill imposed 12-hour shifts on men who were allowed one meal while working, largely of flour, which they had to cook for themselves; and they were given this daily ration only if the previous day's assigned task had been completed. Wages were at the level of pitiful starvation; but that, after all, did not surprise the doctor. What particularly shocked him was something else. 'If by any chance,' he found, 'any worker needs to defecate it is there that he does it, using a sack to keep the excrement until his shift is finished.' And the 12-hour night shift, just to make sure, was locked inside its work-place from dusk till dawn.

Nasty, of course, but that was in a Portuguese colony: the British, surely, were different. How different? Packed with hard-nosed information, Joseph Hanlon's useful book recalls other reasons for pain. At least 20,000 Mozambican migrant workers died in Rhodesian mines between 1900 and 1920, not counting all the other African miners who died in the same mines at the same time. Those who went to South Africa fared still worse. Only in the period 1902-14, for example, an average of about 3,500 Mozambican miners died *every year* from accidents or disease contracted on the Rand. And so it went on at one or other level of pain in each of the colonial systems, and for decades.

Hanlon's sympathetic and on the whole justly critical story of post-independence Mozambique does well to begin by sketching the ferocious nature of the colonial legacy. The time has certainly come to set the memorable successes of the liberation war (1964-75) against the failures since then, as well as against the often considerable achievements. Yet one can do this, validly, only with some grasp of the meaning of the legacy. For in this respect, at least, the Portuguese system can be said to have been exceptional: it left behind much that was worse than useless for the building of a decent way of life, and almost nothing that was useful. The record, here, was more damnably destructive than even that of the Belgians in the Congo or of the Italians in Somalia.

Against this kind of background, Hanlon shows the gains of independence to have been both real and many, whether in the freeing of minds and energies, the extension of health and education services, or in large perspectives opened on the vision of a decent way of life. He is particularly good, as well, on the present and potential changes to the advantage of women, although without for a moment suggesting that huge obstacles do not remain. During his five years as a foreign correspondent in Mozambique, from 1977 to 1983, he has used his reporting skills to good purpose. This purpose is to help us to understand why the hopes of the year of independence, 1975, are now hemmed round by a profound economic and social crisis.

Disasters from flood or drought, the one hard upon the other, would in any case have stretched the newly independent government's capacity for remedial action. There were almost no skilled workers, fewer technicians and little administrative experience, but huge and immediate problems of hunger, unemployment and rural distress. These problems were bravely tackled, but then came direct South African aggression coupled with indirect South African aggression by way of bands of saboteurs and would-be usurpers of the state power won by Frelimo, the Mozambican liberation movement. Yet large errors of policy, greatly adding to these disintegrating pressures, have been Frelimo's own responsibility. The worst of these in Hanlon's view (and I agree with him) began in 1977 with moves towards forms of 'socialism' which, in effect, handed power and finance to a 'state bourgeoisie' with little interest in the actual needs of rural producers. This led to a preference for state farms over co-operatives, and to 'big projects' which were at least premature. Only in 1983 did the trend begin to be reversed, but at the eleventh hour.

Hanlon's book about all this, and much else, is welcome and well done, if with some weaknesses. His own disappointment tends to translate into saying what should have happened; and the tone, now and then, becomes irritatingly didactic. Some cross-reference to comparisons and contrasts in Mozambique's 'sister countries' of the former Portuguese empire would have been helpful. It is surprising to find this author guilty of the error of supposing that the so-called Unita movement, in Angola, had or has any legitimate claims to anti-colonial struggle. But these are small blemishes. His book should be read by everyone who wants to understand the true measure of the problems of post-colonial reconstruction in the world we have now. □

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Both earnest and rational

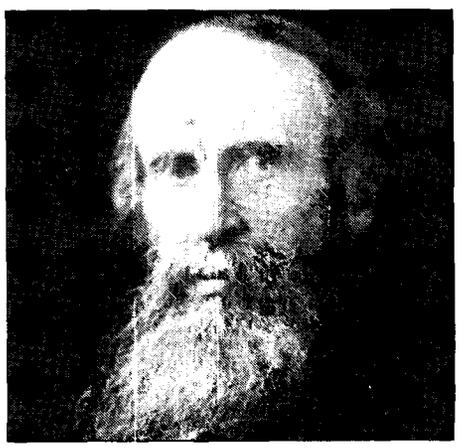
Sarah Lawson

Leslie Stephen: The Godless Victorian
NOEL ANNAN *Weidenfeld* £16.50

LESLIE STEPHEN (1832-1904), the biographer of so many Englishmen and the first editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, is himself a fitting subject for a biography. This is Annan's second treatment of Leslie Stephen; it is an expanded and updated version of his *Leslie Stephen*, published 30 years ago, but it is still not an attempt to replace the old but good *Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen* by F.W. Maitland (1906). Annan has, however, taken his cue from Maitland, who hoped that some day someone would illustrate Stephen's 'life by his books, his books by his life, and both by their environment'.

Leslie Stephen's daughter, Virginia Woolf, portrayed him as the distant and tyrannical Mr Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*. Leslie Stephen was moody and unsociable, but he was also a good companion, a sympathetic friend and a devoted husband. He taught mathematics at Cambridge until 1862, when he suddenly lost his faith and therefore had to resign his fellowship. He married Minny Thackeray and lived in respectable but not terribly fashionable Kensington. When she died he married Julie Duckworth and they produced the four remarkable Stephen children.

Leslie Stephen was a blend of the active and the contemplative — a scholar and intellectual who was also president of the Alpine Club and a pioneer in the new Victorian sport of mountain climbing. He was a gentleman amateur in much of what he undertook, and so he fell between



Leslie Stephen

several stools. He was a philosopher, a historian and a literary critic but, by being all of these, he was not taken as seriously as a specialist would have been who tackled only one profession. He thought himself a failure and once lamented that he had only 'a good second class mind'.

The second half of the book is nothing less than a survey of British thought in the 19th century with excursions forward and backward to explain various causes and effects. 'To understand Stephen,' says Annan, 'is to understand Evangelical morality and Victorian rationalism.' But we almost entirely lose sight of Leslie Stephen while the philosophical influences on him are described.

How has our culture become so secular, Annan asks, especially when the Victorian period was a high point of piety and church attendance? Leslie Stephen contributed to the gradual change in motive from doing good for

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the sake of getting to heaven to doing good as a benefit to society. He was 'a child of the Evangelical tradition' who brought the intellectual earnestness of the Clapham Sect to an entirely secular rationalism. The question that troubled Victorians of all religious persuasions was whether a society that had abandoned religion would still be a moral society. What could take the place of religion as a force for keeping society together? Was the conscience implanted by Christianity or did it exist independently? Agnostics had to demonstrate that good conduct would not disappear without religious sanctions because the sense of right and wrong was independent of them. Freethinkers like Leslie Stephen believed that altruism and a social conscience would gradually correct the ills of society and generation by generation humanity would continue to improve, just as the recently propounded theory of evolution held that species change and improve.

Annan manages skilfully to portray the philosophical controversies of the last century as battles with attacks and counter-attacks. He also enlivens the narrative with effective metaphors and gracefully witty turns of phrase, although sometimes the metaphors seem relentlessly tacked on for literary effect. The notes are copious but unobtrusive, tucked away at the back and listed by page number. The complete lack of a bibliography is puzzling, however. □

FICTION 1

Spook time

Grace Ingoldby

Ironweed
WILLIAM KENNEDY *Viking* £7.95
Peeping Tom
HOWARD JACOBSON *Chatto* £8.95
According to Mark
PENELOPE LIVELY *Heinemann* £8.95
The Railway Station Man
JENNIFER JOHNSTON *Hamish Hamilton* £8.95

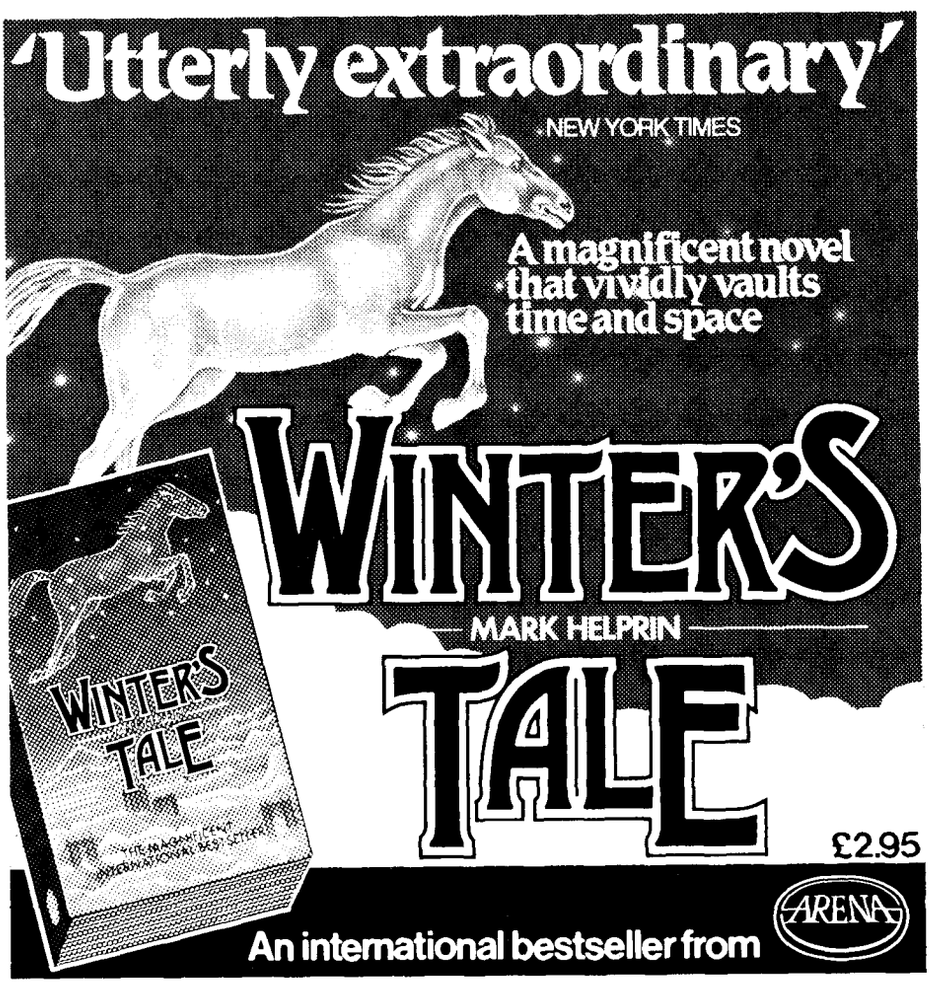
'IF IT DRAWS BLOOD or breaks heads I know how it tastes': fact for Francis Phelan, American-Irish Catholic, 'ganch', 'damn fielding machine' of a baseball hero, family man/murderer, compulsive runner, maudlin drunk, stumbling burnt-out bum.

Kennedy sets his story in Albany, New York, 1938, Halloween, All Saints, cold clear nights, spook time for Francis now 58 and back in his hometown working at the cemetery to pay back a debt. With guilt his last remaining possession of any substance, Fran stumbles eloquently through a once familiar city peopled now with the walking, talking dead. 'Memory is as vivid as eyesight.' Fran is inching towards death, his natural compulsion to flight checked by a sense of final expiation for his multitude of sins. Through the past and present; into flops, 'Whatdya think this is, the Waldorf-Astoria?' outside mission houses where drunken bums expire without fuss, their fingers and faces chewed by dogs. The story is movingly told, lovingly written, crammed with unforgettable detail: Helen, Fran's lover, stealing a record and placing it beneath her blouse above the stomach tumour; Fran's graveside confrontation with his baby son, the only death by misadventure; the night spent in the weeds when the troopers came; the evening he shows up on his family after 22 years with a turkey in his hands; Fran soaping his underpants in a sink, 'they separated in two pieces in his hands'. There is a great deal of obsessive washing about this man, soaping and shaving, putting on the dignity and putting off the guilt, putting on the swell.

Two earlier Albany novels dealing with Legs Diamond and Fran's son, Billy the gangster — *Legs* and *Billy Phelan's Greatest Game* — are published sequentially by Penguin, adding depth to a city and an era of emblematic, fated men. If there is little silver lining for Fran and Helen, their creator now deservedly has a lurex sparkle to his name: having been rejected 13 times before Saul Bellow intervened to put Kennedy back on the map, *Ironweed* is now the winner of the 1984 Pulitzer prize. A great book.

Perhaps when fashion takes funny books seriously Jacobson will win some prizes too. Just why Barney, a smart Jewish city kid, ends up penitentially wandering Cornish cliffs and crags like a blemish, a fancy freak in sleek-piled fur and stack-heeled Bally slip-on snakeskin shoes, is explained in **Peeping Tim** when Barney (Australians think it's short for Barnold) comes clean, 'well cleanish'. It would be a shame to reveal why a man who considers Hardy a 'miserable old shit', and a dishonest one to boot, ends up cleaning lavatories in Castle Botterel, or why it is here, among the 'bean-eating fantasists' and the locals of 'The Crushed Emmet', rather than in Finchley, that Barney feels curiously at home. The novel has a positively South American exuberance and its women are built to scale, Amazonian manipulators whom Barney looks up to and, when life is as it should be for him, in at. In this second novel Jacobson confirms all the promise of his first, stepping beyond the much pillaged campus scene into a rich, well observed, fetid and funny one that is all his own.

Country air can be lethal and Mark, Miss Lively's bookish hero, gets a nasty dose of it while writing the life of Strong, a literary gent, and it becomes necessary for him to immerse himself in papers kept at Dean Close, the family home. Lifting his head from an attic trunk he is likely to see Strong's granddaughter Carrie who runs a garden centre in the grounds... **According to Mark** deals with its hero's growing passion for Carrie — he finds he can forgive the fact that she knows nothing of Henry James — and, more interestingly, his growing suspicions of her grandfather who manipulates him from the grave. That biography is a devilish, two-way process, and that the only truth it can approach is a multi-faceted one, are the most telling aspects of a book whose characters are finally too 'novelish' to take us to their hearts. Miss Lively is fluent, funny and astute but despite the scale of the issues raised here — life, love and the difficulties of truth — this is the book of the singe or scald, never the third degree. ▷



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When Jack finds his mother on the sofa with the **Railway Station Man** he describes the scene as 'nauseatingly grotesque' — the fact that it isn't, that 50-year-old female flab coupled with the Merrick-like Roger, mentally and physically scarred by the Second World War, is delicately, tenderly written, is the strength of an occasionally rather wobbly book.

Helen Cuffe, a painter just deciding to take her art seriously, lives in Donegal after the death of her husband (shot by mistake in Derry) whom she does not mourn. She is 'not well acquainted with pain' but her suspicion of a relationship with Roger — 'Oh hell. . .there has to be disaster, unhappiness somewhere in all this' — proves to be well founded. Donegal is not the place to get away from it all, pain and politics inevitably impinge. Johnston is clearsighted and evocative in her description of the windswept, seaside village which includes a nasty church, a new estate and a caravan park, but a trifle misty-eyed about the rest. Questions hang unanswered, glimpsed, in the damp Irish air: Who is really mad, Helen who paints or Roger who believes that trains will run through Knappogue Road again? What is the difference between a freedom fighter and a terrorist, one war and the next? But these are peripheral to what is at heart a love story of middle age, convincingly and tenderly told. □

Robert Penn Warren

True love

In silence the heart raves. It utters words
Meaningless, that never had
A meaning. I was ten, skinny, red-headed,

Freckled. In a big black Buick,
Driven by a big grown boy, with a necktie, she sat
In front of the drugstore, sipping something

Through a straw. There is nothing like
Beauty. It stops your heart. It
Thickens your blood. It stops your breath. It

Makes you feel dirty. You need a hot bath.
I leaned against a telephone pole, and watched.
I thought I would die if she saw me.

How could I exist in the same world with that brightness?
Two years later she smiled at me. She
Named my name. I thought I would wake up dead.

Her grown brothers walked with the bent-knee
Swagger of horsemen. They were slick-faced.
Told jokes in the barbershop. Did no work.

Their father was what is called a drunkard.
Whatever he was he stayed on the third floor
Of the big white farmhouse under the maples for twenty-five years.

He never came down. They brought everything up to him.
I did not know what a mortgage was.
His wife was a good, Christian woman, and prayed.

When the daughter got married, the old man came down wearing
An old tail coat, the pleated shirt yellowing.
The sons propped him. I saw the wedding. There were

Engraved invitations, it was so fashionable. I thought
I would cry. I lay in bed that night
And wondered if she would cry when something was done to her.

The mortgage was foreclosed. That word was whispered.
She never came back. The family
Sort of drifted off. Nobody wears shiny boots like that now.

But I know she is beautiful forever, and lives
In a beautiful house, far away.
She called my name once. I didn't even know she knew it.

FICTION 2

Plain sailing

Gillian Wilce

Noah's Ark
BARBARA TRAPIDO *Gollancz* £8.95
Short of Glory
ALAN JUDD *Hodder* £8.95
Her Living Image
JANE ROGERS *Faber* £9.95

ALL THESE are second novels — all by writers who were well received first time around, all fluent and solidly accomplished and, where they are open to question, those questions are interesting ones.

Ali, protagonist of **Noah's Ark**, has, as we are often reminded, 'a bleached, pulpit look', a long, white neck and long, reddish hair. She has had two marriages and a bad time and is just about surviving in mutual over-anxiety with 11-year-old daughter Camilla when four-square American Noah comes to the rescue. Two children later. Ali experiences a rather muddled time during which she meets an idealised non-lover from way back and revisits her native South Africa.

Barbara Trapido and her Ali both possess a nice line in knowing, amused observation — "'Poetry is for women, I suppose?" she said. "Created by men with women in mind. Like Crimplene.'" The most acerbic comment is reserved for chicly radical pretensions. Within the ark, where Noah keeps Ali safe from the world, there is directness about matters physical and sexual, jokiness, a warmth of family affection. The tastefully placed spotlights shine invitingly on the domestic furniture and the flood outside is almost wholly curtained out. South Africa is simply Ali's personal past.

Despite a comically stereotyping way with most characters outside, Barbara Trapido's attachment to the ark's inhabitants tips into the sentimental, a fact which gives a faintly complacent tone to proceedings. Camilla's confident sexuality, for instance, is regarded with almost reverent awe by her creator, who has already described far too many portions of her anatomy simply as 'wonderful'.

Happy endings are no bar to seriousness (look at Jane Austen) and the portrayal of contentment and pleasure one of the most demanding of tasks. But, for all its apparent sophistication, *Noah's Ark* is a romantic novel because there is no genuine tension. This ark sails on a papier-maché sea and its fate is never in doubt, whatever the incidental joys of cabin-life.

Alan Judd's **Short of Glory**, although also a comedy, takes its Lower Africa in some earnest. The country is seen by, through and round diplomatic Brits, in particular Patrick Stubbs, foreign office new boy. His dual role — third secretary and unofficial liaison with the Lost and Found agency which is looking for missing Consul Arthur Whelk — allows for daily embassy absurdities, set-piece diplomatic

Contd on p. 34

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Shorter reviews

The Arms Race to Armageddon: A Challenge to US/NATO Strategy: Generals for Peace and Disarmament
Berg Publishers £7.50 & £3.95
Objections to Nuclear Defence: Philosophers on Deterrence
ed. NIGEL BLAKE and KAY POLE
Routledge £5.95

Although it runs to 150 pages of rather wooden prose, the argument of **The Arms Race to Armageddon** is easily summed up. NATO strategy, determined by 'circles around President Reagan and Caspar Weinberger', threatens Western Europe as well as the USSR. The European NATO powers must press the recalcitrant Americans to take arms control seriously, for 'undoubtedly the willingness of the Soviet Union to negotiate and compromise is more than mere talk'.

Some peace campaigners have argued similarly. Should they not welcome the support of these 13 former NATO generals? And is it not encouraging that the generals were able to confer, thanks to 'a high measure of cooperation' from Moscow, with retired Warsaw Pact colleagues 'presently involved in Peace Committees and other public organisations in their respective countries'?

Dialogue on these terms has had a sadly predictable outcome. The authors not only endorse Soviet negotiating positions (which have indeed been more reasonable than American ones), thus stressing détente and arms control rather than disarmament; they endorse the official Warsaw Pact line almost in its entirety. Having argued that US bases undermine Western European sovereignty (as they do), they go on to present recent Soviet missile deployments in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the GDR as legitimately defensive: as if there could be no question, there, of tension between superpower and satellites — or between governments and truly 'peace-loving' citizens.

A complementary critique of Warsaw Pact strategy is promised, admittedly, for next year. Meanwhile, one hopes disarmament activists will greet the present book with the scepticism it deserves. Much better read the essays, by philosophers (including such heavyweights as Bernard Williams and Anthony Kenny), collected in **Objections to Nuclear Defence**. Michael Dummett and Roger Ruston write particularly well about nuclear ethics, and the volume offers lucid and informed argument on a variety of themes.

M. H. Ryle

The Art of Autobiography in 19th- and 20th- Century England
A.O.J. COCKSHUT *Yale* £10.95

In this study, A.O.J. Cockshut is careful to draw the distinction between autobiography and biography. There are many 19th- and 20th-century figures who engage his interest and one interloper, Boswell, who 'reads himself like a man reading an exciting thriller and stopping his ears as he says: "Don't tell me what happens next".' Cockshut considers that the most distinguished autobiographer retreats 'from life, temporarily, to find something in himself that the ordinary round of life, both domestic and professional, ignores or pushes to one side'. De Quincey, Benjamin Haydon and Newman were among the best, finding their natural form of expression in autobiography.

Cockshut is not just concerned with the great figures of the past: he writes about lesser known autobiographers who are in many ways more fascinating than the famous — Harriette Wilson, Eleanor Farjeon, Stephen Spender and Forrest Reid.

Characteristic of Cockshut's style are his personal asides. 'I once heard an eminent Oxford law don, chuckling over the Law Report in *The Times*, which told how the Court of Appeal had quashed a conviction for theft on a technicality. He kept repeating: "Very bad justice — but (with enormous emphasis) very good law".' — this in response to the Farjeon children's early discovery about misdemeanour: that if you could get away with it, you could not be brought to justice. J. R. Ackerley discovered this during his homosexual quest, but in the end gave it all up for 15 years of his dog's 'single-hearted, incorruptible, uncritical devotion'.

Cockshut's book is an eminently wise and thoughtful discussion of the autobiographical genre, complementing his study of the biographer's art.

Brian Martin

Beyond the Dragon's Mouth
SHIVA NAIPAUL *Hamish Hamilton* £12.50

Beyond the Dragon's Mouth collects Shiva Naipaul's short stories and journalistic 'pieces' from the last decade and a half. The autobiographical essay which gives the book its title provides a fitting background for the stories which are set, with one exception, in Naipaul's native Trinidad. They display a warm engagement with the lives of the island's poorer classes, deriving a generous humour from their foibles and short-comings, empathising with their sorrows and tragedies. The estrangement from Trinidad that Naipaul admits to later in the book casts no shadow over these stories which, while avoiding any hint of sentimentality, have about them the glow and freshness of remembered childhood. The society portrayed is in a state of innocence, before what Naipaul sees as the post-colonial fall.

Whether recording his findings in Brixton, hunting in vain for the 'Holy Grail of Rastafarian authenticity' or disparaging Albert René's new socialist Seychelles, Naipaul is at pains, in the articles that follow the short stories, to expose the gap between the fantasy of rhetoric and actuality which in his view frustrates the legitimate aspirations of black people.

It is sad that his impatience with self-deception, cant and political imposture, conveyed in the main by astringent irony, occasionally slips into the belligerent language of prejudice. Talking about 'the assorted wog-doms that have come into being during the last twenty-five years' will inevitably shut him off from the very readers he might be supposed to want to reach, and necessarily limits the value of his criticisms. This is a pity, as the subversion of language by ideology, which is Naipaul's constant theme, is an important one.

It would be wrong to suggest Naipaul casts his cold and pessimistic eye only over the failings of minority movements and left-wing regimes. In 'The Aryan Dream' he explores the deepening fissure between the aggrandising propaganda of the Shah's 'White Revolution' and the actualities that led eventually to the Ayatollah's. Nor has Naipaul kind words for Jimmy Mancham's ideal of a 'brothel state' in the Seychelles. *Beyond the Dragon's Mouth* is a challenging, uncomfortable book, which deserves a hearing.

Simon Rae

Cabaret: The First Hundred Years
LISA APPIGNANESI *Methuen* £5.95

This intelligent history, splendidly researched and illustrated, has been brought up to date since its original publication in 1975. The premise remains as before: 'cabaret' is an alternative newspaper, coming to the fore when official media are either under censorship or in cahoots with authority. To be true to itself cabaret must be insolent, ugly, above all instructive. Liza Minnelli has no place.

The virtue of this approach is that it draws a clear line between cabaret and other entertainments, while acknowledging a relationship with the 'legitimate' stage. Lisa Appignanesi concurs with Tynan's view that cabaret 'is not only satirical in itself, but the cause that satire is in other theatrical forms', an influence that is clear in Jarry, Wedekind and Brecht. In 1900, when Paris, Munich and Berlin had cabaret, London had music-hall, which might explain the comparative feebleness of our theatre.

The most detailed sections of *Cabaret* concern Germany. By perfecting a medium which denies any common identity between actor and role, German intellectuals faced up to fascism with performative gestures that mocked its monstrosities. Celebrities such as Claire Waldoff, Karl Valentin and Valeska Gert practised an art macabre, erotic and absurd. Even Dachau had its 'Kabarett'.

The absence of a native tradition has made us fall back on invitation, imitation and, too often, dilution. A pity, then, that Lisa Appignanesi's enthusiasm for her subject has prevented more stringent commentary on recent British developments. Nothing produced by the Sixties satirists matched the bitterness of their hero Lennie Bruce, but graduates of the Comedy Store deserve better than the routine tributes of post-punk journalism. The history of cabaret suggests that one test of the 'murderous throwaways' of Alexei Sayle and the 'poisonous' barbs of Tony Allen will be their power to affect theatrical trends. There were signs of that happening a few years ago, when Maggie Steed, herself a formidable solo performer, guyed Airey Neave in Brenton and Howard's *A Short Sharp Shock*. When times are bad, the grotesque looks good.

John Stokes

BARBARA TRAPIDO
Noah's Ark
'A warm and comic song of praise' — *The Times*
'Racy, vibrant and witty' — *Guardian*
The sparkling new novel by the author of *Brother of the More Famous Jack*
£8.95
Gollancz

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fiascoes and even more extravagant misadventures in the company of disaster-magnet Chatsworth. But these all happen in a world which also contains masters and servants, black townships, riots, pain.

This very busy book is focussed through the suitably transparent lens of Patrick's personality. He is supremely ordinary: anxious to perform well while deeply sceptical of the whole set-up; liberal enough to indulge in conversational competition in expressing right-minded opinions and conservative enough to be panicked by the arrival of a somewhat emblematic left-wing acquaintance; moved to pity and anger by the plight of his servant Sarah but even more pre-occupied by his own puzzling feelings for Joanna whom he 'shares' with policeman Jim Rissik.

Patrick's commonplace decency (he is so middle-of-the-road that he is out of step with everyone) throws into relief the oddities all round but also preserves the farcical moments from Sharpely overblown excess.

> 'But he was so nice,' she said, pained. 'Quite charming, really. You make him sound awful.'
> 'Can't he be both?'

Much in *Short of Glory* is both. The title is another Biblical reference: there is none righteous; all people and peoples are flawed. It is a view which permits a full-relief social portrait complete with ridiculous bits and suffering bits. But one wonders now and then whether its a-political even-handedness isn't edging towards indifference. More generally, one begins to wonder whether the English post-colonially abroad give rise to such fictional hilarity and mirth because they *are* very silly, or whether it is sometimes a way of excusing them.

Patrick, however, departs not laughing but full of the memory of the dead. And one question clearly answered here is whether Alan Judd's first novel was a freaky success thanks only to its powerful Northern Irish setting — it wasn't.

Jane Rogers, in **Her Living Image**, walks a high wire with much skill and only the rare, hardly perceptible wobble. Carolyn, a conscientious schoolgirl with an anxiously protective mum and a self-effacing dad, has an accident (maybe) which splits her into two possibilities: Caro, injured, slow to recover, rejecting the family security blanket, and Carolyn, who just missed being hurt. This latter self weds teenage boyfriend Alan and becomes an anxiously protective mother, while Caro, living in a communal house and wrestling — with costly honesty — with the beliefs of the women's movement, becomes a landscape architect, turning waste land into park.

Though they, of course, never meet, their stories entwine; separately they grieve and worry and learn. Neither exacts more sympathy than the other; both are credible extrapolations of youthful Carolyn. There is no overt judging between them. Circumstances give them different lives — but there is, for each of them, choice about what to do with and within those circumstances.

The book may sound schematic but the ideas it discusses practically never become detached from the feel of soil, the look of a new baby, the texture of people's lives. Like Ali, Caro and Carolyn are left with hope, but theirs is more hardly won. □

FILMS

True to himself

John Coleman

'Baby, It's You' — Sheik meets Jill

Baby, It's You (15)
Screen on the Hill
Mikey and Nicky (15)
Minema
Bolero (18)
Classic, Haymarket
Dreamscape (15)
ABCs, Shaftesbury Avenue, etc.; Classic, Oxford Street

ANY PIECE this week, which is much like any other (moderate to lousy), has to start with a few words one would like to be as new minted as they are heartfelt. I came into this reviewing slot at almost the time François Truffaut was re-making cinema, from his profound love of it. His staggeringly memorable first feature film, that part-autobiographical and wholly poetic but drily non-self-pitying stare at a bad childhood, *Les Quatre Cents Coups*, dared to end on the only freeze-frame — boy, ocean — that persistently takes my breath away. No space to go into the hows and whats of where the hugely gifted, peculiarly sentimental, quite unpredictable talents of Truffaut took him from there. Of course, most of us preferred him when he pursued a path leading rather from Renoir than Hitchcock. There will be at least several theses boringly in the clogged PhD pipe-line about all that, *sans doute*. For me, he made a handful of masterpieces; or near-runs at them — the one-off, bleak and beautiful *L'Enfant Sauvage*; the first one, his *400 Hundred Blows*, inevitably; its merry-mad successor, *Jules et Jim*; and the utterly genial testimonial to the whole absurdity of film-making, conveyed in its title, *Day for Night*. Truffaut was infatuated with cinema; he turned out to have a kind of genius for making it. What's the hackneyed phrase? We are the poorer for his going. But how much the richer we are for his leavings.

To the workaday business and an agreeable item, **Baby, It's You**, written — from a story by Amy Robinson — and directed by another fellow who has an instinct for film coursing through his veins, John Sayles, what you might call a natural. He bathes corny happenstances in head-on sympathy, appearing to have a ready and willing relation to life. This means, as it often does with these rare cases, that he can engage your feelings for normally lost causes, here the tacky love-affair between a nice, middle-class lass Jill (very good Rosanna Arquette, of whom much is asked as an actress and all is delivered) and a street-swaggering burk, the oily-haired, self-styled 'Sheik' (pronounced — one trusts wittingly — 'chic' and played with a kind of appropriate clumsiness by Vincent Spano). His ambition — the year is 1966 and the place Trenton, New Jersey — is to be Frank Sinatra. Jill's aims are a trifle forced on her and land her at somewhere out of the boyfriend's bailiwick, namely in snobby Sarah Lawrence college, where she gets the treatment: a put-down on her aspirations as drama-student, a short-course in pot and pottering dates; a fair old run-around. This is superbly scripted and played, with nuances even underdone. It is also wickedly comical, in precisely the right local, localised style. All

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right: the 'happy', dancing, swirling grand finale — I hope not to have marred your pleasure by mentioning its possibility — left me let down with a bit of a bump when I wanted a grind. But the lovely observation of those bewildered American faces — the man who would be King and is disinterred in Miami as a dishwasher given the chance to mime Sinatra-sounds at the weekend, 'Strangers in the Night' being the mocking number that recurs, and the girl who would be Sarah Bernhardt rather than a Sarah Lawrentian and would settle for something much simpler than that — and the very exact accents and angrinesses are tapped to something approximating truth. Wherever that is to be found.

All art, we know, is lies, but some lies are more convincing, more fun that others. So what, for crying out loud, inspired the nuttily witty Elaine May to write and direct a botched gangster movie like **Mikey and Nicky**? The only reason in sight is that she was improperly brought up in the school of improvisation, marvellously when she crossed her mind with that of Mike Nichols and they worked out of Chicago towards their different destinies. As it happened, I was in Chicago when this odd couple were mating their virtuosities: they were so funny you couldn't believe it. Somehow, a lot later, Miss May (who has conceived a movie or so of parts — Walter Matthau languidly on the make for her millionaired spinster fuzzlement in *A New Leaf* and getting the worst of it) perpetrated this terrible thing back in 1976. It has to have arisen from a heavy lunch or something, with those noteworthy off-the-cuff thesps John Cassavetes and Peter Falk present. Present they are in this occasion, which has been rightly hanging around since 1976, as the kind of bad men who are really good men but when it comes to the crunch — as it does, with a lot of decently-shot racing about rainy night streets — shits.

Bolero is a preposterous effort by the husband and director of Bo Derek, John Derek, to show he don't care what she do. This is a genre (*vide* Blake Edwards and Julie Andrews) that might be looked into, for those with time and stimulus for opening cans of worms for money. **Dreamscape** is a tolerable S-F notion that got away, essaying to combine sword-and-flying-saucery with Hammered horror. Christopher Plummer is always rapidly identifiable as a rotter, anyway. □

THEATRE

Sound and fury

Benedict Nightingale

An Honourable Trade
G.F. NEWMAN *Royal Court*

TREVOR GRIFFITHS's *Comedians* began it, I suppose, with that climactic encounter in which an aspiring Grock harangued and ritually insulted a couple of dummies in evening dress. It certainly seems to me that since then left-leaning dramatists have been writing about the nob classes with a more venomous exasperation. Witness, for instance, the Savoy-Grill scene in Steven Berkoff's *Decadence*, with that upper-crust diner braying and shrilly snorting as he stuffed himself with food and vomited it back up. Witness the moment in Paul Kember's *Not Quite Jerusalem* when the two English drifters 'entertained' an

billboard

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Theatre

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Poetry

YORKSHIRE OPEN POETRY COMPETITION, Prizes £115. Sole Adjudicator Vernon Scannell. Closing Date 20 November 1984. Details sae: Leslie Richardson, 'Crossfields', Upper Poppleton, York.

billboard continues on p.37

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Israeli kibbutz by draping themselves in Union Jacks and flashing their bare bottoms, a piece of chutzpah later explained as an inarticulate protest against the endless arrogance they'd suffered back home. Or witness much of Richard O'Brien's *Top People*, which tottered into the Ambassadors the other day, to expire a few performances later.

This was a quite remarkably incoherent piece, a sketchy scrambled tale of nefarious dealings in high places, peppered with the sort of jokes you might imagine Tom Stoppard concocting after brain-removal. The characters included a sold-out socialist statesman, an American movie-maker given to playing sexual games in an SS uniform, an international financier of apparently awesome power and, not least, a number of people with names like Simon Winlass-Chunder and Jocasta Rhone-Slainger. 'Yah, yah,' these Sloanes inevitably chirruped, provoking the inevitable reply, 'Oh, you're German, are you?' It was silly and it was muddled; yet somewhere amid the silliness and muddle one could catch much the same fed-up voice. How *can* such people continue to lord it over us, now, in late-20th-century Britain?

That's the feeling that more articulately emerges from *An Honourable Trade* at the Royal Court. G.F. Newman's previous credits include *Law and Order* for television and *Operation Bad Apple* for the Court itself, two sober studies of corruption in the Metropolitan police; and one looked to him to inject some of his grainy realism into a genre rather stronger on feeling and rhetoric than on observation and fact. Top people aren't, after all, Griffiths dummies or Berkoff grotesques or Kember abstractions any more than they're scurvy O'Brien travesties. They are, or are widely reported to be, flesh and blood, gland and brain-cell. Interesting and even significant though the rancour of these playwrights may be, it would be good to see it anatomised, explained and justified in a little more detail.

Well, Newman clearly knows something about the way our law-makers go about their business, if less than *Operation Bad Apple* suggested he knows about the way our law-enforcers perform theirs. But now consider some of the score or so scenes in which he puts this knowledge to dramatic use. In one, the Attorney General, in trouble for raping a prostitute, is interviewed by the chairman of the Tory Party, who has just betrayed their old friendship by impregnating his old friend's wife. They agree to follow the advice of a top cop — himself one of 483 corrupt detectives the A-G wants to prosecute and the Cabinet plans quietly to forgive — and get the young woman declared insane by a cooperative shrink. Are you still with me?

Then I'll continue. In another scene, the selfsame party chairman discreetly chats up the psychiatrist, whose teenage daughter has now been raped by the rampaging law chief. Perhaps because he's an old Wykehamist and a reliable chap, perhaps because he's promised a safe seat to fight in the next election or perhaps because he himself takes a lubricious interest in his daughter, the good doctor urbanely consents to yet another cover-up. Shall I go on, maybe describing the scene in which Margaret Thatcher, breezing in with smile and perm, decides that the best way simultaneously to avoid scandal and punish the unruly backbenchers who've been disobediently demanding his resignation is to promote her Attorney General to be Lord Chancellor of England?

But no. You'll have gathered already that Newman has written the modern equivalent of a Jacobean tragedy, packed with implausibility, coincidence, sensation and shock. Now, that might be fine if he had the power, brio and verbal richness of a Webster or a Tourneur. But he hasn't, and wouldn't seem to want them. On the contrary, his style is as determinedly drab as it was in *Bad Apple*. Everything about the play, up to and including the naming of the Prime Minister, suggests that he wants us to see it as an authoritative exposé of Tory government in action. Now, that too would be fine, if he were some theatrical Tam Dalyell, able to substantiate some of his plots, intrigues, sensations and shocks. But he can't. Instead, he piles lurid accusation on lurid accusation, surrendering to a cynicism so indiscriminate and sweeping that one ends up disbelieving even those villainies one might more selectively have credited.

Again, why must the wretched A-G have been seduced by his power-crazed mother as well as regularly screwed at public school? Even when his play comes to its central character and central point — what hope of good government when it's exercised by people whose class faults include sexual and emotional mutilation? — Newman can't resist his habit of Jacobean exaggeration. Richard Wilson plays down what's brutish and up what's forlorn in the protagonist's pathology, transforming a word like 'necessary' into a plaintive bleat of 'necessahrahaay' as he does so; but neither he, nor the equally understated efforts of the rest of Mike Bradwell's cast, can hide the truth. The play adds some feeling but little substance to the upper-class archives. It's a high documentary fantasy, that's to say hopelessly marooned between fact and fiction. □

ARCHITECTURE

Carbuncle corner

Jules Lubbock

A MONTH AGO Patrick Jenkin, overruling his Planning Inspector, turned down the design for the National Gallery extension on the grounds that its tower was utterly alien to Trafalgar Square. So, we are back to the beginning. What went wrong, and what's to be done?

Jenkin and his Inspector share the general opinion that it was the architect who went wrong, and urge him to try again. God forbid! But, poverty-stricken though his work is, the Inspector's report on it indicates that the real problem arose from three fundamental (and utterly mistaken) assumptions, which both he and Jenkin persist in endorsing.

First, that it is a matter of national urgency for the vacant site to be developed; second, that the National Gallery has an immediate need for new galleries; and third, that there is no alternative to funding the scheme other than by selling the ground lease to an office developer in return for a gallery on the top.

'Carbuncle Corner' has stood empty for half a century without anyone noticing. Why then did its redevelopment suddenly become a matter of urgency in 1980? Because, we are told, the continuing dereliction of a site of national importance was a reproach to the nation. In that case, it surely deserved better than some semi-private enterprise arrangement with office accommodation thrown in, cobbled together in indecent haste, which will wreck once-and-for-all the opportunity of improving this corner of the square.

The Director claims that the main galleries are already overcrowded and with eight annual acquisitions will steadily grow more so. But it is a fact, of which most people remain unaware, that the National Gallery is certainly the only major museum in this country and probably in the world to have its entire collection on public display. At the current rate of growth this happy situation will not last; but the new gallery will need the whole, rather than a part, of the site to house the 800 new acquisitions of the 21st century.

It emerges that the real 'need' for an extension is to fulfil the Director's dream of hanging together the North European and the Italian paintings of the Early Renaissance as an illustration of his pet theory that the 'scientific' perspectival art of Florence, to be displayed in the central core of the new gallery, was the fount of European painting, while anything tainted with Gothic, like Botticelli or Van Eyck, was a tributary to the mainstream and should be shunted into the side rooms. This could be done within the highly flexible plan of the existing rooms. But no! He must have rooms tailor-made to enshrine his vision in an unalterable hang. His interpretation of the history of painting is open to question — to shackle future generations with it is sheer vanity.

No wonder then that the leaseback scheme was the only possible source of funds for such an adventure. The Treasury sensibly decided that other national museums had more urgent needs. The Inspector shows that the Trustees made no effort to explore other sources of finance. How then can they claim that only this one is viable?

So there is no urgency after all. The present project can and should be dropped. Everyone, including architects, has until the end of the century, when space really will be needed, to devise a purpose-built and flexible gallery. To fund it part of the £3m. annual purchase grant could, if necessary, be reallocated: £1m. a year suitably invested would produce £20m. in 13 years.

The site calls for a grand gesture, to accord with the existing Gallery, just as that was designed to relate to St Martin's-in-the-Fields. The Gallery is far better architecture than it is given credit for. Face-on it appears to be a flat wall unifying the square. In fact, its facade is stepped out so that the side views, dominated by its projecting portico and dome, form a climax both to the vista from Pall Mall and also to that from the Strand, which includes the Eleanor Cross, Nash's pepper-pots and the spire of St Martin's. These vistas display the romantic

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Looking sideways from the Strand

English love for towers, domes, columns and steeples, of which no fewer than 20 adorn the surroundings of Trafalgar Square, while from the steps of the Gallery the three pinnacles of Westminster can also be seen down Whitehall, making this the most majestic skyline in London — marred only by the modernist stump of New Zealand House in the Haymarket, which the abortive tower somewhat resembles.

Each element of this skyline also exemplifies the genius with which British architects observed decorum and showed respect for public taste in adapting the classical to the earlier gothic style, as Brunelleschi also did in his lantern for the Dome of Florence Cathedral at the dawn of the classical revival. The extension requires some equally exotic pinnacle to enliven its corner, to rhyme with what already stands and to create a new vista from Leicester Square.

Great public architecture cannot be rushed at the best of times, let alone when there is barely a handful of architects worthy of the name. But by 2000 a new generation who know not Mies van der Rohe or Le Corbusier will have arisen, and what better spur to their invention than the prospect of a major public building in Trafalgar Square, in just the same way as the rebuilding of the Palace of Westminster stimulated the imaginations of the best architects from Wren onwards, contributing to the ultimate splendour of Barry and Pugin's edifice. The Gallery extension may be a smaller task, but that makes it the ideal birthplace for the architecture of the new millennium. □

MUSIC

A pacifist opera

Andrew Clements

King Priam
Kent Opera
Tippett: The Composer and his Music
IAN KEMP *Eulenberg Books* £21

THE ROYAL OPERA's feeble contribution to the celebrations for Michael Tippett's 80th birthday next year is to be a revival of the 22-year-old production of *King Priam*, last seen in 1975. It's a staging (directed by Sam Wanamaker, sets by Sean Kenny) which has worn well, with a stark austerity matching the language and approach of Tippett's epic opera. Yet since the London Sinfonietta's stunning concert performance and recording which

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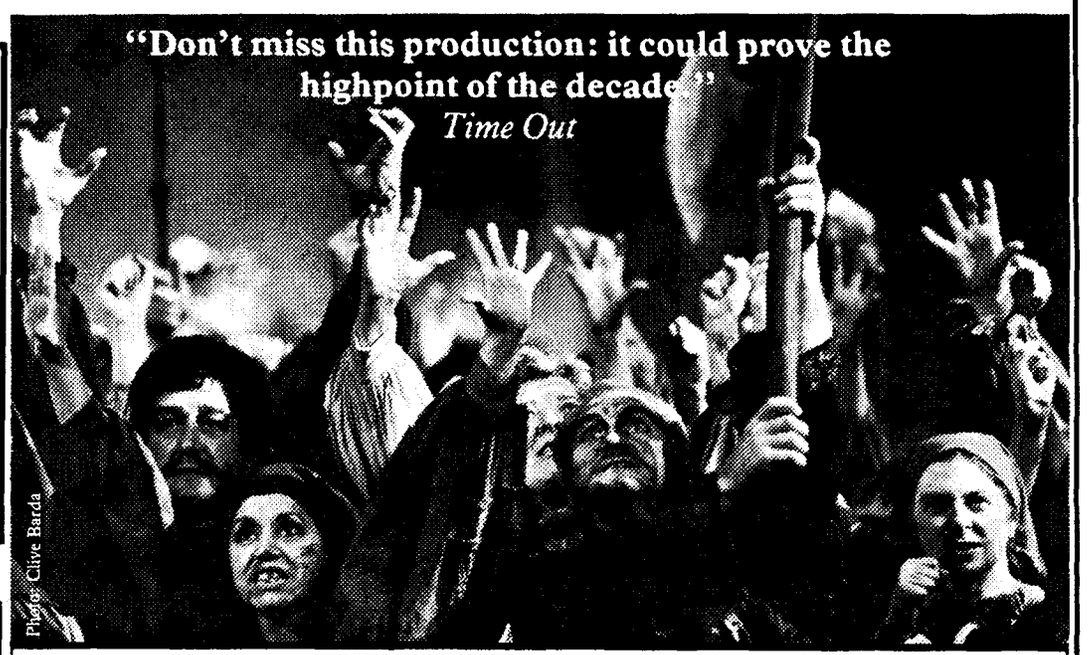

BORIS GODUNOV

"Tarkovsky's vision of Mussorgsky's opera is far removed from the external pomp and ceremony that usually surrounds the work. He is concerned with the inner drama of Boris — the politician's murder of an innocent child to further his ambitions and, as the performance proceeds, it slowly reveals the image of a man alone and broken by power." *Wall Street Journal*

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Royal Opera House Covent Garden

Arts Council

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forced a reassessment on those who regarded *Priam* as the poor relation among the canon, there's been the need for a new production to do dramatic and musical justice to the score: to confirm it as the most cogent and comprehensively successful of all Tippett's stage works.

The stunning account from Kent Opera is everything one could have hoped for: freshly sung and acted, intelligently produced and underpinned by superb orchestral playing. It's necessarily on a smaller scale than the Covent Garden version but in a suitably sized theatre (I saw it in the high-tech Derngate at Northampton) the impact is overwhelming. Nicholas Hytner's production avoids a specific allegiance to the period of the Trojan Wars; David Fielding's designs use a framework of reinforced concrete, the accoutrements of war kept to a wall of sand-bags, and costumes have vague classical overtones. Hermes, the messenger of the gods, arrives from the flies adorned in a golden loincloth; Achilles sulks in a tent of soft satins and velvets; the 'altar' upon which Priam is brutally killed is merely a mat laid centre stage. Everything about the production looks right; each effect is precisely calculated, without any spurious glosses. Hytner presents a tragedy of individuals caught by the constraints of a militaristic society in which free choice is harshly circumscribed; Tippett's most explicitly pacifist opera becomes a curious complement to Hytner's production of *Rienzi* seen at the Coliseum last year, of which echoes may be detected in this *Priam*.

It would be possible to imagine better singers in all the roles than those of Kent Opera, but few who would respond with more wholehearted conviction. At the core are Rodney Macann's surprisingly young Priam, not the grizzled veteran familiar from Covent Garden but a warrior king still in early middle age, able to hunt and fight alongside his sons, though without the full tonal weight some of his music implies, and Neil Jenkins's, seedy, paunchy Achilles, who delivers his big second-act aria with finely sustained tone and the wary cry that closes the act — surely one of the most brilliant dramatic coups in 20th-century opera — with blood-curdling intensity. The scene between Priam and Achilles in the third act becomes the emotional linchpin of the drama and, as a result, the whole opera sustained itself more thoroughly: if *Priam* has a weakness it is that the intensity of the first two acts is not always carried through the third; here it was, and the death of Priam became a genuinely tragic conclusion.

Around these portrayals are grouped the brutish Hector of Omar Ebrahim, leading his father and brother into a grisly thanksgiving over the body of Patroclus, and a fervent, open Paris from Howard Haskin, a black Paris whose colour adds an extra layer of resonance to his relationships with his family. The trio of Trojan women is more uneven, though Sarah Walker's Andromache launches the third act with some beautiful singing, and the chorus figures are most skilfully produced by Hytner, fully and effectively realising Tippett's intentions of moving them between action and commentary. All of the cast sing with a total lack of artifice, which is a great credit to Roger Norrington's account of the score; its devastating impact owes much also to the virtuosity and responsiveness of the young orchestral players. All in all a superlative production of what increasingly proves itself to be Tippett's greatest opera.

SUCH A judgment would not be shared by Ian Kemp. His study of Tippett, long awaited, acknowledges that *Priam* contains some of his greatest music, but finds that 'it does not take wing often enough, its sound quality is too persistently raw and it has faults in construction'. That is in accord with a view of the composer which takes the long haul towards the pinnacle of *The Midsummer Marriage* as the crucial and musically important part of his career and which views the subsequent works of the last 30 years with interest and enthusiasm but a certain amount of scepticism. It's hard not to view Kemp's work as an attempt to regain the composer for his old admirers, for those supporters who championed his music through the 1950s and '60s, when Britten was all-conquering in British music and Tippett was a gifted but peripheral figure, and before a new, younger generation had been converted through works such as *The Knot Garden* and the third symphony.

Accordingly, much more space is allotted to the first half of Tippett's career: his struggle towards an individual idiom and expression is most painstakingly documented and analysed. Kemp's discussion of *The Midsummer Marriage* is dense and thorough, each thread of its Jungian subtext carefully teased out; similarly, but on a less lavish scale, the background to *The Vision of St Augustine* is fully explored. While this is undoubtedly the most valuable study of the composer yet published, its value is diminished partly because detailed discussion ends with *The Ice Break* of 1977 — subsequent works up to the Triple Concerto are covered in a brief epilogue and the bibliography includes no articles on the composer published in the last seven years — and partly because its treatment of major works is uneven. *Midsummer Marriage* is allotted over 70 pages; detailed discussion of *Priam* occupies 16; the early and minor *Song of Liberty* and the later, greater song cycle *The Heart's Assurance* each receive four pages.

Kemp's thesis divides the output into three periods — the first leading to *Midsummer Marriage* and the works stemming from it, the second initiated with *Priam* and ending with *The Ice Break*, Tippett's period of 'expressionism', and a third representing a rejection of the 'crude' effects of its predecessor and reasserting absolute musical values which began with the fourth quartet and the triple concerto. One wonders how the magnificent *Mask of Time*, not discussed, would support such a scheme.

A short biography begins the book: clearly not intended to be a detailed life, it nevertheless contains much new and fascinating material, not least on the course of Tippett's political activities during the 1930s and his period as a Trotskyite, and his withdrawal from specific political allegiances in the post-war years. There is still much, though, that must await a full, authorised biography, but it is unlikely that anyone will need to attempt another full-scale treatment of the music for some years. □

An afternoon at the Palace

Chris Price

THERE ARE plenty of South London Saturday afternoon options — sleep, washing the car, digging the garden or just slumped in front of wrestling on TV. My choice of standing in rain watching Crystal Palace failing to score fortnight after fortnight as they slowly sink for the third season running to the bottom of the second division, is *prima facie* a less rational option than any of them. But I do it.

To explain the eccentricity to others, I invent patriarchal, family excuses. By arriving at a particular point overlooking the goalposts at the Holmesdale Road end at five to three, I stand a fair chance of meeting my youngest son; then there's tea and toast with my daughter and four-year-old grandson after the match at their flat overlooking the ground. It's even possible to fit in a bit of shopping; a recent milestone in Palace's slow decline was a property deal which translated a large slice of their Selhurst Park ground into London's biggest Sainsburys. In truth, all these are excuses. I go for the football and the players, especially the old stagers, like Jim Cannon, Palace's perennial, bearded, Scottish captain. Even, or almost especially, when they are playing a desultory, dreadful game, devoid of the skill with which they are endowed. I am an incorrigible Palace supporter.

Recent seasons have taxed loyalty hard. Only five years ago, we were actually on top of the first division for a couple of weeks, and dubbed by the sporting press as the 'team of the eighties'. (The mark of a true supporter is that he invariably refers to his team in the *first* person plural.) Now, after a continuous quick-fire manageria procession of legendary birds of passage — a total of six since 1979, including Terry Venables, Malcolm Allison and Alan Mullery — we're still firmly stuck on the 'down' escalator. For two seasons running, we've avoided relegation only by the skin of our teeth. The one player we had with any magic inspiration, Vince Hilaire, has been sold to Luton to reduce our £2 million overdraft and now we're stuck at the bottom of the second division again. The only chink of light is our latest manager, Steve Coppell. Having only just ceased playing the game himself, he looks as though he is actually in the business of getting Palace to play football rather than working out business deals on the side. He is young enough at 29 to stay with the side for a few years — that is, if Mr Ronald Noades, our property tycoon chairman, will let him.

The crucial games so far have been against Yorkshire sides and early hopes were raised.

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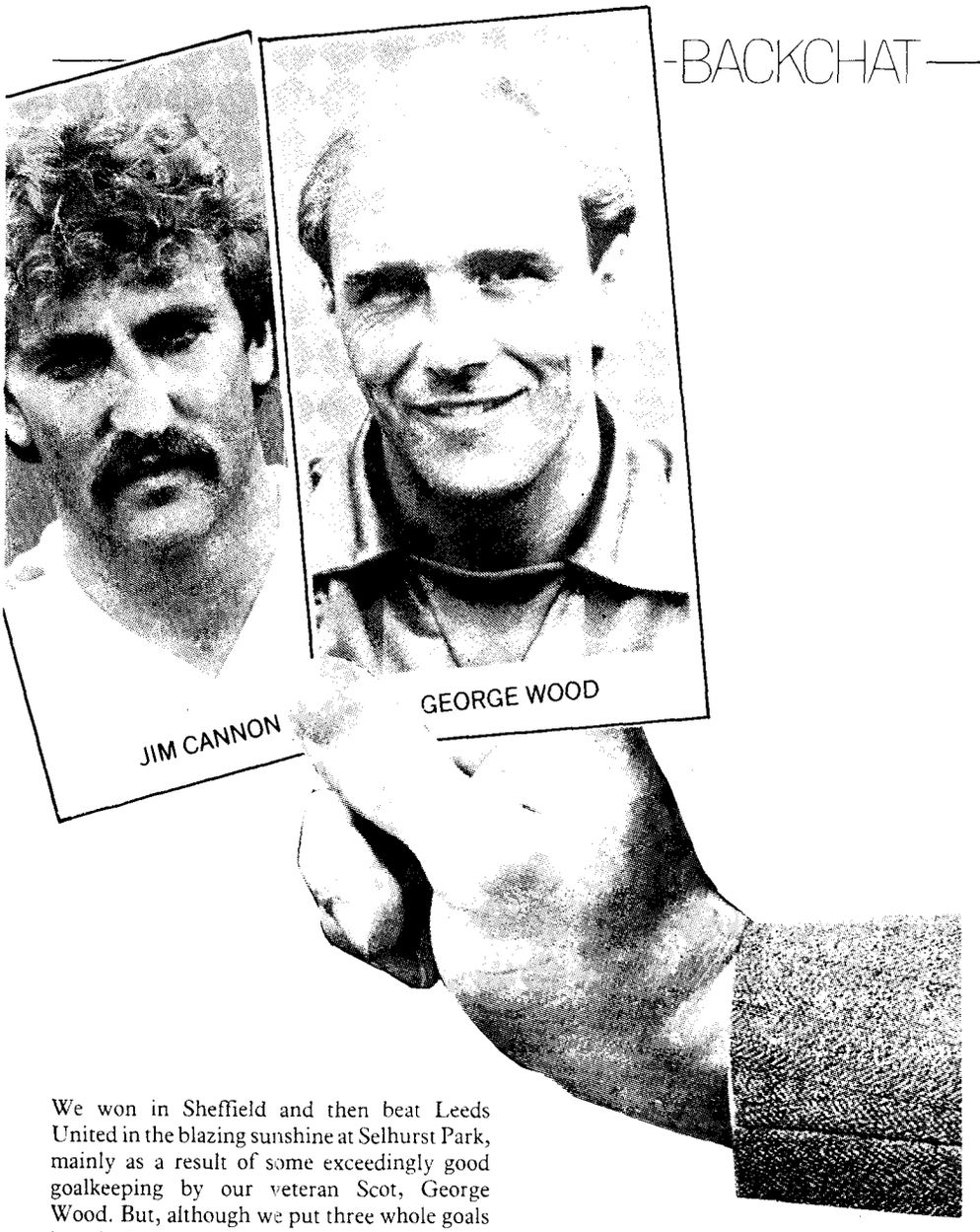

We won in Sheffield and then beat Leeds United in the blazing sunshine at Selhurst Park, mainly as a result of some exceedingly good goalkeeping by our veteran Scot, George Wood. But, although we put three whole goals into the Leeds net, there were only one or two of those fluent 'Match of the Day' sweeps into the opposition penalty area; then the game went predictable again — clever midfield work, a great deal of backpassing to the goalkeeper, the defence going shaky once the second half was under way, and no real confidence that midfield elegance would produce goals in the season ahead.

So it was no real surprise when we lost a fortnight later to Barnsley at home. It was one of those games when you know the result before the match starts: a dwindling crowd, down by 3,000 from the Leeds match and further diminished by the tiny number of Barnsley supporters who could afford to make the journey to London; they were picketed into the visitors' enclosure by wary Croydon police, only recently themselves returned from service in the civil war up North. It was a Sunday match — laid on for the 'family atmosphere', as Mr Noades told us in the programme, but as it turned out, infectiously lethargic. The first nasty touch of winter had me escaping to the stand (£3.50, as against £3.00 in the open) and watching the game horizontally from the centre of the pitch — much less satisfactory than the vertical 'Kop' view from high above the goal. In the end it was the Leeds match without the goals — some good chances in the first 15 minutes, then slow deterioration until Barnsley scored the winner a few minutes from the end and gave their little knot of supporters the last laugh.

Palace's troubles are not much different from those of dozens of other league clubs; and at least there's more money around in London than the North to sustain a gate of 6,000. So it is still just possible that Coppell enthusiasm can raise morale and reverse the slide. But Palace, along with other London clubs, faces a chill wind of competition, and the problem is exacerbated by the cultural and sporting Sahara Desert of South London — the largest conurbation in the world without a university and the biggest in Britain without a First Division football team. For years there's been an insidious shift of investment to the north of the Thames — which now has *five* First Division teams, if you count Watford. They pre-empt the crowds and the sponsorship. Palace shirts are now bare of any sponsoring godfather and almost the only advertisements now left around the pitch are for Fresh, Clean Food at Sainsburys and Canon Copiers (the league sponsors). It will take several bleak years for Noades and hard grind for Coppell if we are to get back in that First Division. But a curious mixture of addiction, habit and sheer irrational loyalty will keep me there until we do. □

Naseem Khan

Earthed

WHEN I WAS in Cheltenham a few days ago, I was told about the problems they were having in one of the nearby villages with local kids. The children were apparently throwing all sorts of missiles up at the chestnut trees in order to get the conkers down. So the local council decided in future to inject the chestnut trees so that they wouldn't bear conkers any more.

If this seems a shocking solution to what must be a very old problem, it will probably not surprise either Sue Clifford or Angela King, founders of the organisation, Common Ground. Their thesis is that over recent years the integral link between nature and society has been stretched thin if not severed. A story that seems to demonstrate a complete lack of sense of history as well as responsibility is merely another piece of depressing evidence to add to other examples — the destruction of wildlife, the loss of hedgerows, an increasingly homogenous countryside due to landownership concentrated in fewer hands and to modern agricultural methods.

Common Ground has, however, not been formed as a vehicle for jeremiads. Clifford and King believe something can still be done, through the missing link of the arts. At London's ICA this Thursday (25 October) and for the coming two Thursdays they have co-organised a series of discussions, under the title 'Second Nature', which explore the relations between nature, culture and society. Next week a book appears which Common Ground initiated and, with Richard Mabey, co-edited. It is also called *Second Nature* (Cape, £12.95). Beautifully produced, it brings together 42 writers and artists, from John Berger and Edward Blishen to Fay Weldon and Raymond Williams, asking each one to respond as they wished to the theme of landscape and nature.

The genesis for Common Ground itself came in the Seventies. Both women had had a long track record with environmental movements, but both sensed, they said, a staleness in the level of debate. The concerns had become gradually more and more distant: whales, pandas, tropical forests; the last examples of species or terrains. It was, in a way, museum piece conservation. In such a context, people felt unable to confess to a fondness or attachment to their little patch; conservation was the preservation of the special by the specialist.

Common Ground took its stand, therefore, on the ordinary bits of nature in which they felt people took a private, almost shame-faced delight. How, they asked themselves, could they persuade people that this affection was not

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ckpoint were after him he went into print
anding an interview, then refused to give
, saying 'The BBC are the scum of the earth
you can quote me on that.' Don't they still
people up there?

oger was in danger of digging his own satire
n he embarked on the case of the missing
day resort where a double-glazing expert
l 60 people a parking place on a barren
ping site in Spain at £20,000 apiece. It made
ellent theatre. On the one hand you had the
motional video of a 'Sunshine Dream' at
ly (but imaginary) Puerto Chrommelynck,
golf course, marina, piscina, theatro and
rapeutic centre for the mainly ageing
ters. On the other you had a stretch of
bland with the above facilities clearly
ked on bits of board. There was one
lliantly-staged confrontation with
omethingummy talking against the clock
explain his lack of every kind of
horisation, to the jeers of a single
consolate sunshine-dreamer from the
dow of his isolated breeze-block-house.

The idea of a *Checkpoint* programme in South
ica is an amusing one. It would have to be a
-scale revolution. In **Tsiamelo: A Place of
odness** (C4) we met two elderly black
men who had been turned out of a farm that
been in the family since the 1860s because
area had become a 'black spot' (i.e. a white
). According to them, apartheid is getting
se not better.

I remember a time when black and white farmers
lived together helping each other. Today I feel so
distant from things that were so dear to me. I
stand here today as a foreigner.

heartbroken restraint allowed a terrible
on of the likely fate of the South Africans
h their wretched dreams of purity: 'You dig
le for others, you may end up falling there
rself,' said the woman, quoting an African
verb. I shall always remember these two old
ds, much like my granny, singing 'Yes, we
e no bananas' for us without their teeth.
en they were kids they thought the 'nice
ey potatoes' were wearing woollies. □

Weekend Competition

2845 **Set by Gordon Knott**

uld compers re-write the opening sentence
ny well known novel in such a way as to
ve the story into an immediate cul-de-sac?
'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that
ngle man in possession of a good fortune
st be gay.' Max five attempts per entrant by
dnesday 7 November.

2842 **Set by Ms de Meaner**

nty Python-type skits to be judged by the
hor of *The Golden Skits of Wing-Commander
riel Volestrangler* (Methuen) in person.

port **By Wing-Commander Muriel Volestrangler FRHS & Bar**

a writer, I was absolutely delighted that so
ny *NS* readers submitted skits; however, as a
writer, I was disappointed that they were
h crap, most of them very little better than
rent TV comedy. As a woman writer, I was
eved that the female contribution to this

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archipelago of literary ordure was so small. As a writer, albeit a woman writer, I was fascinated to note that these six all came from Brize Norton. As a keen horticulturalist, I have no hesitation in awarding prizes to:

Leading Aircraftwoman W.S. Brownlie
Flight Lieutenant Andrea Kirby
Pilot Officer N.J. 'Gorgeous' Warburton

and to Petty, Hamill and Rudge (see below).

Policeman: Could I see your papers, sir?
Motorist: Papers? What papers?
P: (*Writes*) 'No papers'.
M: Look, I'm not supposed to carry papers. It isn't 1984.
P: (*Watch*) On the gregorian calendar it is, sir. You're not Libyan by chance?
M: It was a figure of speech. What's this about?
P: I'll put it to you straight, sir: are you a miner?
M: Do I look like a miner?
P: Don't make it harder, sir. Are you, or have you ever been, a miner?
M: No.
P: How do I know that?
M: How does anybody know anything?
P: According to Popper, we build truth-functions from elementary propositions.
M: Wittgenstein. Not Popper.
P: (*Writes*) '. . .a right one here.'
M: See my hands. A miner's would be calloused.
P: Won't wash, sir. Some of the crafty sods use gloves. Besides, after six months idle you'd have hands like a lord. I don't suppose. . .
M: No. I am not Lord Lucan.
P: Mm. Have you any miners concealed in your vehicle, sir?
M: How could I? Look.
P: Any whippets, homing pigeons, brown ale?
M: Don't be ridiculous.
P: Shall we open the boot, sir?
P: (*Pigeons fly out*) Obstruction is a very ugly word, sir.
M: Not as ugly as. . . eschew.
P: How about. . . miscegenation?
M: Auchtermuchty.
P: Proper names don't count.
M: Tergiversate, then.
P: Sacerdotal.
Fade

FLIGHT SERGEANT NOELLE PETTY

Doctor: (*examining X-ray photos*) M-mm, yes, your liver's hobnailed. It will have to come out.
Patient:. (*Alarmed*) Me liver? 'Obnailed? Gawd 'elp us! Wot's that mean doctor?
D: (*Smiling spitefully*) It means your liver resembles a stevedore's boot that's what. It's been knackered by an excess of bibbing. A surfeit of possets. Too much slaking and quenching after stop-tap. That's what it means mate. And look at those liver spots. . .
P: Wot liver spots?
D: (*With disgust*) Those brown splodges up your arms. You look as if you're coming out in hamburgers.
P: I thought them was nicotine stains.
D: (*Shouting*) Nicotine stains? You don't hold your bloody cigarette in your *elbow* do you?
P: (*Humbly*) Ain't there somefink you can do?
D: (*Savagely complacent*) Oh yes. I can *do* something. I can carve a trench due north of your bum and yank the liver out by the roots. That's what *I* can do.
P: (*Pleading*) Can't yer — like — drill out the bad bits, fill in an' render, so's it don't show when I smile?
D: (*Glancing heavenwards*) Look chum, your liver is not in your mouth, at least it wasn't when I last checked. You need a replacement liver. (*Turns to telephone, dials number*)
D: Hello, how you fixed for livers?
Voice: (*Audible to patient*) Yeah, I can find you one doctor.
D: Send one up to Transplants would you?
Voice: Right away doctor. With onions?
(*Silence*)
D: (*Slowly. With mounting fury*) Who-the-hell-are-you?
Voice: Canteen kitchen. Head Chef speaking, or there's bacon if. . .
P: (*leaping to his feet in terror*) BLEEDIN' STROLL ON! I'M PISSIN' ORF!

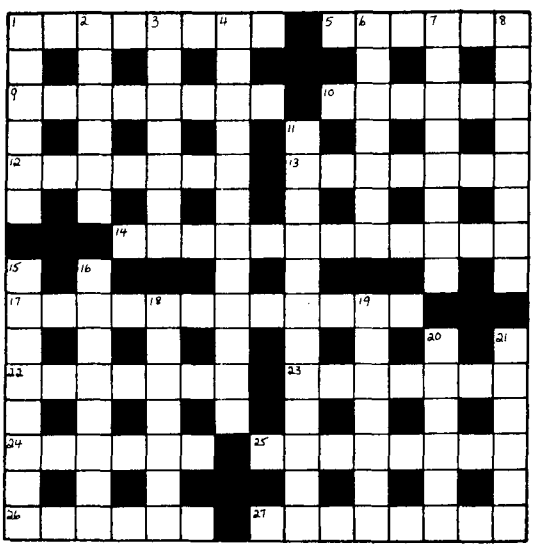
SQUADRON LEADER GERALDINE HAMILL

The year 2004. A man is leaving the house.
Wife: Take care now lad. You know I worry.
Man: Ee lass, try to understand. I'm a picket. I've always been a picket. Me dad were a picket before me. It's the only life I know.
W: But there's safer jobs — like down the pit.
M: Ay, but I'd never be happy in a nine-to-five job, even with holidays, bonuses, pit-head baths and such.
W: But every day you're off not walking through them gates I wait to hear the siren telling me the picket's sent another bonny lad off to t'clink.
M: Ay, picketin's a hard life alreet. When we heave and shove with cracking muscles, never knowing when they truncheons, forever poised above us heads, will come crashing down on us; crawling along eighteen inch ditches past *Sun* reporters; having to relieve oursens in coppers' helmets, always with the threat of CS gas that'd have us coughing our lungs up. But I ask for no other life. Anyhow, what's in me snap today, love?
W: It'll 'ave to be *pâté de foie gras* butties from Hampstead Labour Party today, lad, there's nowt else.
M: Ay, well, we said we'd eat grass and now we are.

WARRANT OFFICER KAY 'K' RUDGE

Weekend Crossword 1458

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1458, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 6 November.



Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

ACROSS

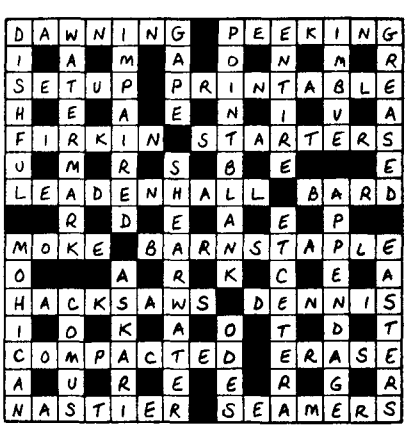
1. Apple or another fruit beside the sea (8)
5. Skills which are possibly compared with arts (6)
9. Manage to smash a tin cover (8)
10. Bronte and company back a writer (6)
12. Journalists show there is the reverse of rubbish in a team (7)
13. A serious indisposition for a maid (7)
14. Fall apart, treating side badly (12)
17. Diplomat who has a morning drink with female clothing on (12)
22. Slowly writing an article on a poet (7)
23. Father found in time to supply provision for maintenance (7)
24. Submitted when you are in the couch of love (6)
25. Things on the field intimidate the fielders (8)
26. Ride on uncomfortably although it is made smooth (6)
27. As a wolf I show amusement about money (8)

DOWN

1. One who is opposed to working puts a note up on his tool (6)
2. Woman who has an article to release (6)
3. Inventor produces a motorway in which no car is smashed up (7)
4. Having made enquiries, one goes in to surround those held in confinement (12)
6. Smoking makes an unpleasant smell (7)
7. Slow deterioration in the composer's style?(4,4)
8. Given this name which brings an unfamiliar lad close (8)
11. Workers exercise supremacy over relatives (12)
15. I am a corn product and so a kind of food (8)
16. Child of Egypt retired and gone to pieces (8)
18. The pure incorporated in the dry (7)
19. Old actress who almost makes last performance (7)
20. Weapon used by artist beside place of entertainment (6)
21. Class with not so much to do (6)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1456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Arts Council of Great Britain

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Further details and an application form are available from **the Registrar, Winchester School of Art, Park Avenue, Winchester SO23 8DL, Hampshire,** on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope. Completed applications to be received by the Registrar within two weeks of this advertisement.

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ADVENTUROUS MALE: 38, excellent appearance, outdoor type, mobile, interests travel, music, seeks attractive, sensitive, blue eyed female, 25-40, with similar interests. Photo appreciated. Box 9514.

AIREDALE TERRIER would welcome congenial female companion (30-50), who might also restore customary joie de vivre, to epicurean academic master (45). Box 9518.

AMIABLE, EASYGOING i.e. flies off handle, moody but doesn't smoke, moderately left, keen music, philosophy, NFT, 40s, shy. Thankfully divorced, now bloody lonely. London. Box 9512.

A PLEASURE shared is a pleasure doubled and this lonely, professional woman, early fifties, would like to meet man for companionship initially. N. Cheshire. Box 9503.

APPEAL for appealing young/youngish discriminating lady (med/small stature). Cultural interests, no ties, invited by equivalent older presentable male writer to contemplate sharing attractive country home near Chilterns. Request photographs exchanged. Genuine. Box 9532.

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ATTRACTIVE FEMALE, slim, intelligent, warm, caring, no ties, young 50s, London area, seeks unattached, cultured, mature male, for lasting relationship. Box 9524.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL man (58) loves arts, seeks attractive, sensual, non-smoking woman, slim/medium (any age to 53), any race/circumstance for warm friendship/enjoyments. Pref. London/surrounding areas. Box 9487.

ATTRACTIVE, REASONABLY intelligent Jewish College lecturer, f., late 30s, 1 offspring, nr Kingston, could meet reasonably intelligent fellow, possibly graduate, with sense of humour. Box 9540.

BLACK FEMALE, Birmingham, divorcée, likes performing arts, good conversation, seeks *permanent male companionship from person* with youngish outlook and sense of humour, under 40. Box 9459.

BLUE-EYED, blonde female artist — gregarious hermit — seeks unattached, intelligent, caring, humorous, successful and attractive man of 35-45. Similar qualities offered. Box 9508.

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FEMALE GRADUATE, 31, London, boyfriend gone, stable, warm, lively, straightforward, socialist, urban/rural, intellectual/grassroots interests, seeks similar male. Photo? New female friends welcome. Box 9504.

FEMALE 30 separated, graduate, would like to meet sensitive, *friendly and mature male, 32 +*, to share politics, food and music. Clwyd, Wales area. Box 9500.

FORMER JOURNALIST, warm-hearted, male law student, 30s, seeks female sympathiser or fellow sufferer, for mutual support. Age immaterial. Central London based. Box 9469.

FRIENDS AROUND the world. Free information. Concordia-International Penpals Club, Box 185, Snowdon, Montreal H3X3T4, Canada.

FRIENDLY GAY socialist (27), local government worker, shop steward, looking for a new boyfriend (over 21). Longish letters from equally friendly men welcomed! Colin, London. Box 9523.

GOLFING LADY sought by high-handicap, graduate male, 50, who yearns for patient partner especially for mid-week play. Home course London area. Genuine. Box 9510.

HELLO! WHICH man out there wants to share *theatre, arts, wining/dining, classical music*, with attractive, professional London woman, mid-40s. Who's willing to chance it? Box 9511.

INTELLIGENT, ATTRACTIVE, independent woman, 40, divorced, interesed in literature, travel, skiing and theatre, would like to meet similar socialist male. North of England. Box 9507.

LEFTIST MALE, 27, interested media, politics, people, many friends, but all platonic, dammit! Seeks lefty woman (20s), for romantic experiences. Yorkshire. Box 9505.

LEFT-WING CHRISTIAN woman would like to meet a like-minded man, for a lasting caring relationship. Box 9539.

LIVELY, BLUE-EYED lady writer in London, willing to meet unattached, humorous, serious, nature-loving, stable male, (late thirties, forties), to see if we have something in common. Box 9509.

LOVING BUT progressive 35 year-old couple would like to introduce a lady to their unions. Discretion assured. Derby/Loughbro' area. Box 9543.

MALE, 36, interested in Shivambu Kalpa (urine therapy) seeks female with same interest. Reading, Berks. Box 9450.

MALE ACADEMIC (45), seeks company of female skier, for one or two weeks Christmas/Easter: alternative dates possible. Box 9517.

MALE UNDERGRADUATE student, 24, 5'8", working-class, Pisces, seeks female companion, 18-28, for love, music, theatre, cinema. Cancer, Scorpio preferred. Newcastle area. Photo preferred. Box 9538.

MAN, AGED 63, black hair, good-looking, good figure, lonely, seeks young wife. Write Box 9501.

MIDDLE-AGED BUSINESSMAN, with some commitments would like to meet lady, around 40, possibly in similar circumstances, who shares his positive outlook on life, in order to explore each others views and have pleasant conversations over long lunches. Box 9526.

MIDDLE-AGED MALE has all the necessities for happy life except the essential ingredient — someone to love and cherish and vice versa. Photo, etc. reciprocated. You can't win the lottery if you don't buy a ticket. Box 9528.

NON-SEXIST (I HOPE!) male, 29, living one hour from London, seeks female who also needs someone who cares. Into theatre, CND and erratic vegetarianism. Box 9457.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE. Widow, 40s, professional, awaits a reply from the articulate, intelligent male who is destined to be made incredibly happy. Box 9430.

N. WALES teacher, amusingly wild, extroverted introvert with cyclists legs, seeks nubile companion for close encounters of the 17th kind. Has cycle will travel. Box 9537.

PROFESSIONAL MAN (47) active, tall and dark, happily tied, seeks new companionship which would be loving, considerate and discreet. The likely lady would probably be similarly placed and could be as astounded at herself for replying as I am for advertising. Box 9530.

PROFESSIONAL, SUCCESSFUL, good-looking, divorced man, 45, own house and car, with passion for arts, sunny places and tennis, seeks relationship with warm, sensitive female, 28 to 40, London; photo. Box 9466.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, early 40s, committed socialist, yet sneaky bourgeouise tastes, seeks similar man, with a view to make a home together. Manchester or around. Box 9516.

RETIRED, LONELY male, middle 50s, no ties, living in Central London, would like to meet female for sincere friendship and holidays, country preferred, would be prepared to live in as paying partner. Box 9515.

SCOTLAND — MALE academic, 60, divorced; addicted to compassion, irreverence, active recreations — sociable but not hearty, wishes to contact woman needing similar companionship. Only first name/phone no. if anonymity preferred. Box 9458.

SHY, LEFTISH, single male, 27, vegetarian, cyclist, interested in music, theatre, pubs, seeks compatible Ms for company and friendship. London/South East area. Box 9502.

SOCIALIST MALE, 34, would like compatible female to share films, pubs, talking, politics, books and maybe more, who knows? Preferably North Lancs/South Cumbria. Box 9525.

TALLISH (6ft) separated male, 60, solvent householder N. London, politically marooned but int. theatre (high-brow to vulgar) seeks spirited female for entertainment and occasional holidays. Box 9506.

TYNESIDE: tall, slim man. Humorous, good listener, 32. Seeks woman for occasional drinks, conversation and friendship, but no commitment. Box 9529.

VERY MYOPIC male, Ametropic, 55, Anglophile, American, literate, lettered, travelled, unencumbered, seeks female with similar opthalmological malady for commiseration, mutuality, association, direction etc. Box 9372.

WARM, ATTRACTIVE, graduate woman teacher, div. 45, 5'5", brown hair, blue eyes, seeks professional man for friendship, companionship, and lasting close relationship. Interests: home-making, music, family-life, people. London. Box 9531.

WIDOW, 63, invites four singles, similar age, to spend Christmas/New Year with her in Welsh seaside village. Share expenses and chores. Box 9407.

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The touring company pioneering celebratory arts invites applications for the new post of

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to research and develop new contexts for the company's live work, nationally and internationally, and to be responsible for its related initiatives in publishing, education, film and video. The successful applicant must demonstrate proven ability in marketing, fundraising and creative planning and a strong commitment to the arts as a force for social change.

Annual fee negotiable in the region of **£10,000.**

Further details from **WSI, P.O. Box 9, Ulverston, Cumbria.** Closing date for applications: **Monday, 19 November.**

NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS requires

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Britain's major teachers' union requires someone to help with its parliamentary relations work. The work involves the preparation of parliamentary questions, monitoring of bills through their various stages, briefing MPs on education and other areas of interest to the union and preparing a regular newsletter for MPs.

Applicants will need to be aware of parliamentary procedures and committed to the trade union movement and the maintained education system.

As the post-holder sometimes assists the head of department in the union's media relations work, experience in public relations or journalism, though not essential, would be an advantage.

Salary £7,635-£9,087 currently under review (inclusive of London allowance). Appointment normally to commence on minimum of the scale. £1 per day LVs. Four weeks annual leave plus generous public holidays. 34¼ hour week (flexitime).

Application forms are available from the **Senior Official (Admin), National Union of Teachers, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD. Tel: 01-388 6191 ext. 234.**

If you would like further information about the job, please ring **Stuart Skyte on 01-388 6191 ext. 281.**

The closing date for receipt of applications is 14 November 1984.

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LISTINGS

FRI 26 OCT

LONDON NCCL Fund raising Dance. 8pm-11.30pm County Hall, SE1. Adm £2. Bands 'The Juke Joint', 'Artery Band'. Singer Adrian Maloney. Tickets from George Smith or Janice Winder, **NCCL 01-403 3888.**

LONDON 'Release the United Democratic Front Detainees' 24-hr picket outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Sq, 5.30pm Fri. to 5.30pm Sat. **Org. City of London AA Grp.**

SAT 27 OCT

LONDON 'Third World, Second Sex' Seminar for One World Week. 10am-5pm Barnes Library, 275 Camden Rd, N7. Registration: Women and the Third World Grp., 43 Stapleton Rd, SW17 8BA. **Sponsored by War on Want.**

ILFORD 'One World Festival of Music & Dance' 7pm-10pm The Drive Methodist Hall, Redbridge, RAM Drama Grp, Satwant Parmer, sitar soloist, Irish folk dancing, Juicy Steel Band. Adm £1/50p children at door. **Org. Redbridge Campaign against Racism & Fascism. 01-550 7144.**

BOLTON Halloween Party 8pm at Socialist Club, 16 Wood St. Disco, food, late bar. Adm. 50p.

SUN 26 OCT

LONDON Wild Women's Evening. OVA, multi-instrumental two women band 7pm Donmar Warehouse, Earlham St, WC2. Adm. £3/£2 UB40. Women only, limited seats so come early. **Details: Jenny Gibbs 01-241 2761.**

LONDON MAPAM-Socialist Zionist Party Meeting with Miners. Tony Wilson, NUM 'The Coal Strike – Anachronism or Real-Politics?' 8pm 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6. **01-328 2554.**

AYLESHAM, Kent. Working Conf. to organise support for the Miners. 10am Snowdon Miners Welfare, Aylesham village (off A2). Sponsored by Kent Assoc. of Trades Councils & NUM. Reps invited from all Kent trades unions & Labour movement. **Contact: Nick Bradley (NUPE) Orpington 39525/Bill Martin (NUM) Medway 400411.**

MON 29 OCT

LONDON 'The hidden pathology of men: the role of medicine' by Naomi Pfeffer in fortnightly series of seminars 'Beneath the white coat' 8pm Adam's Arms, 4 Conway St, W1. **Org. BSSRS.**

LONDON 'Future Job Prospects in the City' – open invitation to all International Banks Staff from BIFU. Spkrs Allen Meadows, President BIFU, Steve Gamble, Asst. Sec. Int. Banks, BIFU. 5.30pm 'The Christopher Wren', St. Pauls Precinct, Paternoster Sq, EC4.

TUES 30 OCT

HOUNSLOW Support the Miners Fight for Jobs – Public meeting 7.45pm Civic Centre, Lampton Rd. Spkrs. Peter Heathfield, NUM Disabled Access and toilets. **Org. Miners' Support Cttee. 01-572 3764.**

WED 31 OCT

PUTNEY Support the Miners! Public Meeting 8pm Dryburgh Hall, Upper Richmond Rd. Spkrs. Dennis Skinner MP, NUM & Women against pit closures. **Org. Putney Labour Party. 35 Felsham Rd, SW15 01-788 8961.**

LONDON Halloween Party for Women Only 8pm Lauderdale House, Highgate Hill, N6. 'The Notettes'. Adm. £2.50/£1.50 UB40. **Details: Jenny at OVA, Unit C8, Metropolitan Workshops, Enfield Rd, N1. 01-241 2761.**

BOLTON Peoples History Grp. meeting with Joyce Whitehead on 'Horwich – Rise and Fall of a Railway Community'. 8pm Socialist Club, 16 Wood St.

ISLINGTON 'Police & Prisons' Spkr. Rt. Hon. Gerald Kaufman MP 8pm Rm. 1. Town Hall, Upper St, N1. **Org. Islington Fabian Soc.**

WIMBLEDON 'Labour's Attitude to the Soviet Union' Public Meeting 8pm 267 The Broadway, SW19. **Org. Wimbledon Labour Party.**

THURS 1 NOV

LONDON CSE London Forum 'Socialist Economics: Theory and Practice? Vietnam & Nicaragua'. Spkrs. Adam Fforde, John Harrison. 8pm Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Pl., W1.

MUSWELL HILL 'Cruise deployment plans' Spkr. Roger Manser, Convenor of London END 8pm Muswell Hill CND. **Details: Jane Morley 01-889 0571.**

BOLTON Irish Music Night with The Fontaines. 8pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St. Adm. 50p.

FRI 2 NOV

LONDON Picket of Barclays Bank, Lombard St, EC3. 12.30-2pm. Called by City AA as part of Namibia Week of Action.

WOKINGHAM 'Rethinking British Socialism' Fabian Society wkend sch. Easthampstead Park College. Spkrs incl Robin Cook MP, Mary Kaldor, Ben Pimlott, Tessa Blackstone, Peter Kellner. **Details: Dave Robertson 01-222 8877**

SAT 3 NOV

WOLVERHAMPTON Labour Arts Festival 2pm-10pm Dunstall Community Centre. Dance, groups, stalls, singers. Adm £2-£1 UB40/50p children. **Details: 714970**

BOLTON Striking Miners Benefit. Live Music, food. 8pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St. Adm. 75p/50p membs.

LEICESTER 'Family in the Firing Line: Anti-poverty strategies in a changing Britain' half day conf. 1.30pm-5.45pm Vaughan College, St Nicholas Circle. Fee: £3/£1.50 UB40. Spkrs. incl. Lesley Rimmer, Deputy Director *Family Policy Studies Centre*, Ruth Lister, CPAG. **Org. WEA Leicester Branch/CPAG. Details: 59740/703813.**

CAMDEN 'Labour's Non Nuclear Defence Policy' Spkr. Mike Gapes 2.30pm Camden Labour Centre, 8 Camden Rd, NW1. **Org. International Fdn. Left Europe, UK Grp. Details: 05827 5399**

LIVERPOOL 'The People's Health: Health Policies & People's Needs in the Mersey Region' Day Conf. Spkrs. incl. Peter Townsend, Chris Ham. **Details: Director of Extension Studies, University of Liverpool PO Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX. 051-709 6022 x. 2778/2779.**

LONDON '1984: The Right to Protest?' Conf. 10.30am-5pm YWCA 16 Gt. Russell St, WC1. **Details: WILPF, 17 Victoria Park Sq., E2. 01-980 1030.**

FORTHCOMING

6 NOV WANDSWORTH 'Welfare Benefit Take Up Campaign and the Mentally Ill' Public Meeting 7.30pm Penfold Centre, 1 Neville Gill Close, SW18. Film 'Disen. led by Jenny Rogers of Legal Advice Project, Springfield Hosp. Adm. Free. **Org. WAMH, 3 Brodrick Rd. SW17.**

7 NOV BOLTON 'The General Strike in Bolton' BPHG Meeting with Bill Harrison 8pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St. **Details: 0204 399494.**

7 NOV LONDON 'High Land Values – How should Labour help new Businesses' Labour Land Campaign meeting 8pm GLC, South Bank, SE1. Spkr. Clive Jenkins (ASTMS). **Details: LLC 91-267 2245.**

8 NOV LONDON Future of the GLC 2.30pm Central Hall, Westminster. **Details: GLC Campaign 01-633 4400.**

9 NOV BOLTON BPHG talk by Beatrix Campbell 8pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St. **0204 399494.**

12 NOV LONDON 'Developments in Public Order Law' Haldane Society Meeting 7pm LSE, Houghton St, WC2. Rm. SO17. 50p non membs. Spkrs. Helena Kennedy, James Wood.

24-25 NOV EDINBURGH Lesbian & Gay Socialist Conf. **Details: Lesbian & Gay Community Centre, 58A Broughton St, Edinburgh.**

1 DEC LONDON Books for Nicaragua – books and records needed for Fair, Morland Hill, Hampstead. Can collect: **Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, 20-21 Compton Terr. N1. 01-226 6747.**

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New Socialist

NOVEMBER

● **The law at breaking point** — with the miners' defiance of the courts and the prospect of concerted action by Labour local authorities next year, David Beetham examines the principles which lie behind our defiance of the law.

● **Reagan's war in Central America** — American Bob Borosage argues that Europe can restrain US aggression. And the Nicaraguan nun's story — Luz Beatrice talks to Jenny Rossiter.

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● Anne Phillips argues **against fraternity.**

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MEETINGS

CRITIQUE CONFERENCE

GOODBYE TO THE WORKING CLASS?

Friday 9 November 7.30pm

1. **Hillel Ticktin & Richard Hyman**
   THE UNIVERSAL CLASS?

Saturday 10 November All Day 10.30a.m.

2. **Huw Beynon**
   WORKING CLASS & BRITISH MINERS' STRIKE
3. **Steve Smith, Don Filtzer & Bob Arnot**
   WORKERS IN THE 'WORKER'S STATE', 1917-1984
4. **G.A.E. Smith**
   WORKING CLASS & MARKET SOCIALISM
5. **Chris Arthur**
   MARXISM & LUKACS
6. **Mick Cox**
   WORKING CLASS IN THE COLD WAR
7. **Baruch Hirson & Lionel Cliffe**
   NATIONALISM & SOCIALISM
8. **Kate Marshall**
   WOMEN & CLASS
9. **Phil O'Brien**
   THE WORKING CLASS IN LATIN AMERICA
10. **Nigel Swain & Bill Lomax**
    WORKERS IN POST-1956 HUNGARY
11. **T. Elger**
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THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 28 Oct. 8 p.m. Informal Q/A Meeting 'Reincarnation & Karma'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: The 1984 Stamp Memorial Lecture entitled: 'The Unfinished Agenda' will be given by Lord Rayner (Chairman, Marks and Spencer plc) at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, 6 November 1984 in the Beveridge Hall at the University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. Admission free, without ticket.

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CONFERENCE

AFRICAN LITERATURE 'New Directions' major Conference 1-4 Nov. Ndebele, Njugi, Sow Fall, Mapanje, other writers present also Africa Arms & Development 10 Nov. Speakers include Judith Hart and Rada Gungaloo. Both held at the Commonwealth Institute. 01-603 4535 Ext. 267.

BOOKS/ PUBLICATIONS

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